



38th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION (WWII)

JANUARY, 1990

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



J. D. Johnson

With the start of a New Year and a new Decade, all the members of the 38th Bomb Group Association responsible for putting out the newsletter and for staging "Reunion

'90" wish each and every member the best in the New Year. With the start of a new Decade, we have to ask ourselves "How Many More" opportunities will I have to meet with the fellows who served in the same outfit. Our lives touched each other many years ago and together we hang on to our memories of a time when we were young and thought we were immortal. At Reunions we share the respect and admiration we all have for one another. All members should give some thought to the future and become actively involved—let us know what you like and dislike about the running of our Association.

WHERE'S THAT FILM?

With "THE SAGA OF THE SUN SETTERS" approaching completion, it has been noted the film loaned to author Larry Hickey by group members as source material could play an important part in developing a video taped history.

Implementing such a project would depend in large part upon how much 8mm and 16mm could be located to augment that now available. Mat Gac (38th BG Photo Section) has offered to make his own 55 reels of 8mm film and film clip seconds saved from a 38th BG history recorded by Gac, Frieden and Wiser, and shown to the group in late 1943. Mat believes that 1500—foot film is still around somewhere and could be a good, solid base for a video history if it can be located.

Anyone with any information as to the whereabouts of this film is urged to contact Mat Gac, 424 Brookview Dr., Rochester, NY 14617.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

September 13-16, 1990

REUNION '90
Dayton, Ohio

PLAN NOW!

EARLY HISTORY OF 38th BG

by Mat Gac

The 3rd BG and the 38th BG were among the first bomb groups to engage the Japanese in the battle for New Guinea and Australia. The 3rd BG ground echelon, like that of the 38th BG, arrived in Australia early in 1942, but it was almost seven months later before they got their first aircraft.

The Japanese had landed at Buna, New Guinea, in July, 1942. They had crossed the Owen-Stanley range to Imita Ridge, about 20 or 30 miles from Port Moresby, by early September, 1942. If Port Moresby were captured, the Japanese would control all of New Guinea from which it could readily invade Australia.

The 5th Air Force, formed in July, 1942, when General MacArthur gave the command to General George Kenney, consisted of a few B-17s which had escaped from the Philippines, a partial B-24 group, and parts of two groups of P-39 and P-40 fighters, all undermanned and lacking supplies.

The 3rd and 38th bomb groups, were designated part of the 5th Air Force, but had no planes. The 38th was scattered throughout Australia with part of Headquarters and the Photo Section with photo trailers near Darwin in the Northern Territory. (Ed. note: Author Gac joined the Photo Section there in June, 1942.) The main body was stationed at Eagle Farms, a former race track at the outskirts of Brisbane. During August the scattered units were united at Breddon Field near Charters Towers, about 50 miles from Townsville.

In early June word came through that the 69th and 70th Bomb Squadrons were enroute to join the 38th BG with their B-25s; however, this encouraging news was shortly followed with a report that they had been ordered to Midway Island, arriving there just in time to take part in the historic "Battle of Midway" where superior Japanese naval and landing forces were decisively defeated, ending any ambitious Japanese strategy to invade the Hawaiian Islands.

During early August, while the 3rd BG was stationed at Garbutt Field in Townsville, Colonel Paul "Pappy" Gunn (who was later instrumental in changing the character of the B-25 medium bomber) learned of a number of B-25s in Southern Australia. In face of the desperate need to prevent further Japanese advances toward Fort Moresby, Gunn fabricated a formal order, flew

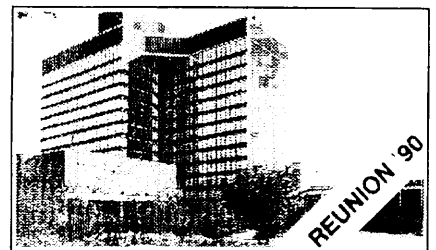
REUNION '90 !!! 38th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION (WWII) September 13-16, 1990 DAYTON, OHIO

The enclosed insert, prepared by Co-Chairmen Lamb and Hunter and President Jack Johnson, paves the way to this exciting event. Plan early, register early to help the Committee formalize plans and stabilize its commitments. Suggestions to any of the hardworking committee of Ohioans are still in order:

Marty Bertram (71), Cincinnati
Gerry Carpenter (405), Cincinnati
Bill Coss (823)
Bob Hunter (823), Springfield
Larry (Pop) Kiele (823), Columbus
Bob Lamb (823), Kettering
Warren Lee (Hdq), Centerville
Bernie Wahrer (71), Dayton
(see your directory for addresses).

The most important element of any Reunion is renewing acquaintances and reliving memories of the most dramatic and traumatic period of our lives, BUT good facilities are also very important:

STOUFFER CENTER PLAZA HOTEL



LOCATION: Center of downtown, 13 miles from Dayton International Airport; minutes from Wright Patterson Air Base.

ACCOMODATIONS: 287 guest rooms with king and queen-size beds; color TV; connecting 1500-car parking facility.

RECREATION: Outdoor heated swimming pool; nearby health club; golf course; tennis courts; adjacent to downtown shopping and entertainment district.

DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT: Continental cuisine; live piano music; panoramic view in Windows Restaurant and Lounge; daily breakfast and lunch buffets; 24-hour room service.

38th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

REUNION '90
DAYTON, OHIO

(Cont'd Page 2)

YOUR ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

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Editor "The Sun Setters" Lew Pavel
P.O. Box 915204, Longwood, FL 32791

ADDITIONAL LIFE MEMBERS

The total number of contributors to the Life Membership Fund has grown to 105. The breakdown by squadron:

| | | | |
|-------|----|-------|----|
| Hdqtr | 5 | 71st | 18 |
| 405th | 44 | 822nd | 17 |
| 823rd | 21 | | |

Members who have joined this support group since September are listed below. Their tax-deductible \$100 donations are invested in insured bank CDs, the interest from which continues to finance Association operations in the years ahead.

Robert W. Allen (71st)
Willard C. Hartzog (71st)
Eugene V. Alford (405th)
Harlan L. Denning (405th)
Mathew C. Gac (822nd)
John M. Russell (822nd)
Fred McMahon (823rd)

Members interested in joining this supportive group should send their \$100 life dues to secretary Al Barbour.

"IN EVER-HONORED MEMORY"

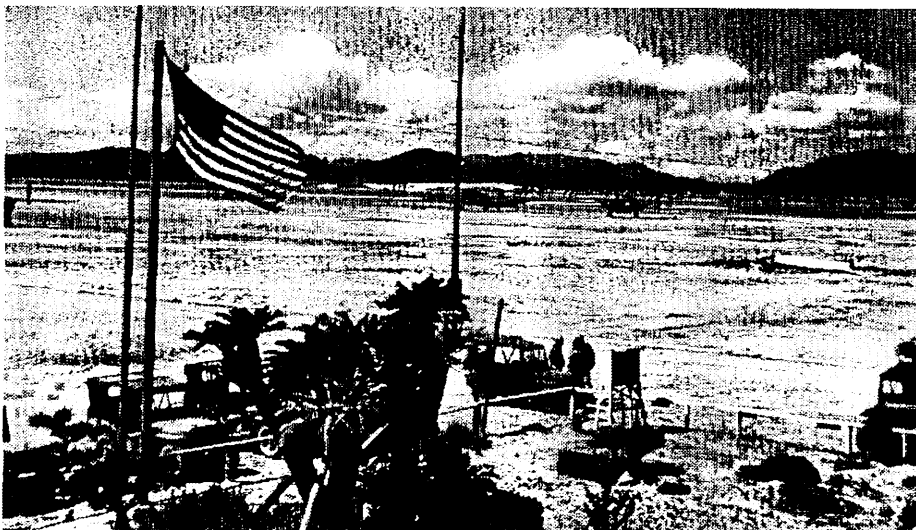
Since the publication of the September 1989 newsletter, we have been informed of the passing of the following veterans of the 38th Bomb Group:

John B. Barbour 71st
George L. Sands 71st
Charles A. Behrens ... 405th
Florian Mechler 405th
Ralph Mussman 405th
Willie G. Wood 405th
Howard F. Holton 822nd
Ralph C. Flaczynski ... 823rd
Ralph P. Heuring 823rd
Earl J. MacDonald 823rd

On behalf of all of their friends in the Association, we extend our heartfelt condolences to the widows and families of our departed comrades.

We thank those of you who have taken the time to notify us of the demise of 38th Bomb Group veterans, affording us an opportunity to honor them with this final tribute. (Please send names for this memorial column directly to our Secretary, Al Barbour, who administers these records.)

REUNION '90
38th BOMB GROUP
ASSOCIATION (WWII)
SEPTEMBER 13-16
DAYTON, OHIO



MYSTERY PHOTO - what airfield is this and where was it? Because the "Mystery Photo" has generated so few answers (mostly incorrect), the format has been slightly changed - a hint of identity is included in this issue.

EARLY HISTORY (Cont'd)

to the base where the 25s were deployed, presented the order and demanded the planes. The officers in charge refused, stating they were designated for the newly formed Dutch Air Force stationed at Merauke, Dutch New Guinea, 400 miles northwest of Port Moresby. Gunn insisted the officers call the General, but before anyone could make that contact, he ordered the pilots to fly the planes north for the 3rd BG.

The B-25s were quickly armed, loaded with bombs and flown to Horn Island at the northern tip of Australia, then on to stage out of Port Moresby. Occasionally Jackson Strip (7-mile) was so congested it was necessary to continue on over the Owen Stanley range to the Buna area, frequently without fighter escort and despite Japanese control of the air, bombed enemy troops in their dug-out fortifications and the airfield and the planes stationed there. An additional objective was the sinking of barges and supply ships in the Buna coastal area to prevent landing of additional supplies and troops.

Ten days after the 3rd Bomb Group's modified planes flew their first combat mission (8/20/42), the 38th Bomb Group got its first three B-25s and crews, an additional six planes arriving shortly thereafter. Although some planes were lost en route from the States and others crashed in Australia, more began to filter in.

Low-level practice missions of a week or more were inaugurated with somewhat modified planes, one of which was lost along with its crew. In early September, 1942, the 38th BG entered combat, assigned to basically the same mission as the 3rd—to interdict supplies and reinforcements from reaching Buna and the Kokoda Trail.

The fledgling 5th AF, undermanned and short of equipment and supplies, staggered under the almost impossible task of containing the much superior enemy force. During early combat missions, it was learned that B-25s used as medium level bombers were very vulnerable to anti-aircraft fire and the Zero's superior firepower. The single 30 caliber machine gun, mounted in the nose above the bombardier, was augmented with .30 guns mounted on each side of the bombardier's compartment, providing more protection from head-on attacks and

servicing to deter attacks from underneath, another vulnerable point. Atop the fuselage, twin 50 caliber machine guns were mounted in a gunner-manned revolving turret, while radio-gunner and photo-gunner could man .30 guns from the waist windows.

With continued losses to Zero pilots attacking head-on and the lack of adequate fighter escort because of limited range, it was obvious more firepower was mandatory. Col. "Pappy" Gunn's obsession was to make the B-25 a more formidable, more effective weapon. Subsequent experiments resulted in the development of the B-25 into a strafing, skip bomber and parachute bomb dispenser during November—December, 1942, and it became one of the Japanese's most feared weapons. Gunn proceeded from four to six 50 caliber machine guns in the nose compartment, and four side-mounted 50s on the fuselage. With the twin 50s in the top turret swinging automatically into a frontal attack mode, the B-25 could concentrate twelve machine guns on strafing targets. Later, two more 50s added to the nose installation provided fourteen forward firing guns, which became standard for most B-25s. (Editor's note: About this same time, Gunn successfully experimented with a 75mm cannon in the nose of a B-25 and reportedly ran one mission on the west end of New Britain where he destroyed a Japanese transport plane carrying a number of command officers. Apparently the project was abandoned because of the stress on the plane's frame created by the recoil.) About August, 1944, the improved B-25J was added to the group with two pods mounted outside the fuselage below the turret gunner, two 50 caliber guns at the waist windows, and two installed in the tail of the plane as stingers.

The heroic flying efforts of the men of the 5th Air Force, aided by the small Australian Royal Air Force, prevented most of the enemy supplies and reinforcements from reaching the entrenched troops at Buna. Meanwhile, Australian infantry flown in as a last desperate measure, stopped the enemy troops toward Port Moresby at Imita Ridge, the high-water mark of the Japanese advance. The interdictment of reinforcements and supplies forced the Japanese to retreat back across the mountains to Buna, the first steps of their long retreat.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The following abstracts from Dick Fields' (71st) 4-page letter seems pertinent to most (if not all) of us.

"To me this period in my life holds a very special place. I have many memories and memorabilia, but realizing it is not relevant to my family or friends . . . Only those involved can relate to those times and feelings."

" . . . I have been compiling a record of my experiences during WWII. My great grandfather was with the 44th Indiana Infantry in the Civil War, yet all I know—he marched to the sea with General Sherman, was discharged in Texas and walked all the way home to Wakarusa, IN . . . How I wish he had written something so I could relive that part of our family history."

"I know my children are not interested in that period of my life. Sometimes I think my grandchildren are and am convinced their children will be—what I have saved and written will be precious to them."

Dick's letter coincidentally arrived the same day our daughter (visiting from Kansas) asked for details about the mission which gained Silver Stars for pilot Ed Mauer and me. Most of my records are lost, but wife Georgia still has the print/photo report of the first tree-top B-25 run on Rabaul, New Britain 11/2/43, sent to my mother by General Arnold. My daughter had previously evidenced little interest in my army career but asked for a copy to show to her children as they grow older—and Georgia is binding my "SUN SETTERS" so they will understand to us the war was 4 1/2 years in the army, not just a few minutes over Rabaul.

We hope Dick's letter stimulates YOU to share YOUR memories of "the big one"—historical, human interest, plain tent/barracks chatter, and photos—some may be too faded or indistinct to reproduce but let our printer decide—all will be returned, used or not. Please, name/address/squadron on back—stickers best, ballpoint verboten. THANKS!!!

MY TRAVELS—Willie Turner

(Richard A. Salome, 405th, forwarded Willie J. Turner's 12-page handwritten diary of his trip to New Guinea with the 405th and 71st ground echelons.)

"Left Columbia, SC, 7/7/42, for Patterson Field for shots, briefings. At 6 p.m. 7/10, boarded air-conditioned troop train (nice berth) for St. Louis, Kansas City, El Paso, Tucson, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh, CA, arriving Camp Stone-man 5 a.m. 7/14. Visited Frisco twice, and 7/21 in to board the 'Bosch Fonatren', a Dutch boat and crew. Overnight at the dock, into the Bay early, anchored, and then under the Golden Gate at 4, 7/21.

"The boat had lots of guns and an American gun crew headed by Lts. Matson and Parks. Boat drill at 10 a.m. daily; several general alarms, but no danger. Shared a closet-size 5-bunk stateroom with Mike Murphy, Frank Thompson, Jack Thom, Gus Popper. The one porthole for ventilation was closed and blacked out at night; made it pretty hot crossing the equator. Shower situation very bad—only salt water—did get a bit of fresh water to shave and wash faces, but no laundry after boarding.

"In the canteen could get cold drinks, candy, and cigarettes (stocked up at 70 cents a carton). Meals very good—Dutch menus, all kinds fancy-named foods, but fish every day got pretty old. Bob Fuqua, Homer Varel, Lt. Mattson and I

played dime-limit poker every evening—passed the time and couldn't lose much.

"On 8/11 entered New Caledonia harbor at 8 a.m.; dropped anchor at Noumea that afternoon. Only the two Navy officers went ashore. Left next a.m. with only an Australian destroyer to accompany us. Learned later had stopped only because 3 ships had been sunk in area recently.

"On 8/15 woke up and saw Australia—at least some mountains, but even that looked good. Landed in Brisbane at 2:47 p.m. 8/15, and were billeted at a race track, but got into town next day—old looking place chock full of sailors and soldiers; very few cars except for army and a few civilian charcoal-powered ones. Several nice buildings had been taken over the General for headquarters.

"On 8/10 some of our planes got in. Fuqua, Al Williamson, I and 60 mechanics went out to the field. Nice quarters in Officers Barracks, and mostly just looked the planes over.

"On 8/22 back to Brisbane; 3 days later at 9 p.m. left for Charters Towers on a typical Australian train—narrow gauge and sorriest wooden cars I'd ever seen. Had to sleep on the hard wood seats, too short to stretch out—took 3 hours to get the kinks out. Stopped at a little station in middle of nowhere, for tea and a sandwich for breakfast and dinner; stopped again to eat at another little place—same routine for 3 days, arriving the fourth night at 3 a.m.

"Breddons was a nice field with a tarred runway 15 miles from Charters Towers. Our planes were there and I was assigned to the 405th under Major Harsh and was named Transportation Officer. Scheduled for Assistant Engineering Officer, but an advance echelon was ready to move out and I was named CO of the unit scheduled for a new field (Rorana) 10 miles from the Japs and 30 miles from Port Moresby, with only access by plane or a very small boat."

"In a 9/8 meeting with Col. Castle and Squadron CO, learned my advance detail would move to Horn Island by air transport the next day. Took off at 10 a.m., arriving at Horn about 3. We set quarters in an old barracks with a thousand shrapnel holes in it, and I made arrangements to eat in the Aussie mess. Ten of our planes came in next day for my 10 mechanics to maintain."

(Editor's note: Turner's surface trip took 54 days from Columbia, SC, to Charters Towers, and 10 days later he reached his first combat zone base.)

WE GET QUESTIONS!

Q. Why don't we use newspaper and magazine clippings mailed to "The Sun Setter?" A. All such articles fall under a blanket copyright of the publication in which it appears, and while it may be possible to obtain permission for reproduction, the time required to clear usage could be excessive.

Q. I sent in an article but it hasn't been used. Why? Keep waiting—when we receive two articles similar in context, we hold the last one received for possible use in a future issue.

Q. I sent in a list of several good books about the Pacific War of interest but none have been mentioned. A. With "SAGA OF THE SUNSETTERS" in its final stages of production under the umbrella of the 38th, other publications could compete for the member's discretionary dollar at this time.

OVERSEAS BY AIR

("My Travels" prompted a review of surface/air travel time to New Guinea with only air record available, the Editor's.)

3/7/43—Columbia, SC, to Hunter Field, Savannah, GA, for assignment as navigator, Lt. Peebles crew.

3/14—Hunter to Chatham Field (15 minutes) to pick up our B-25.

3/19—Ordered to Hamilton Field, CA, RON Key AAB, Meridian, MS (4'45"); delayed by minor repairs.

3/21—RON Jackson AAB, MS (1'00).

3/22—To Tinker AAB, Oklahoma City (7'15"); major engine repair; 6-day billet at hotel (no room on base).

3/28—7'00" to Luke Field, Phoenix, AZ. Propeller malfunction, 2 day delay.

3/30—7'00" to Hamilton Field; on to McClelland Field (45") inspection/maintenance. Base billet; Sacramento available off duty.

4/8—3'30" fuel consumption test enroute back to Hamilton.

4/10—4'00" fuel consumption test.

4/11—4'00" fuel consumption test.

4/14—1'15" compass swing test.

Scheduled flight to Honolulu cancelled; ETF (estimated time of flight) exceeded B-25 fuel capacity safety margin.

4/15-4/25—ETF delays. Each day's departures based on weather ship info and ATC planes reports. "No-go" decision by 3 p.m. released crews till noon.

4/25—Despite high ETF, 18 B-25s cleared to depart. (Rumor: Visiting Congressmen disturbed by # of B-25s doing nothing; safety factors ignored.) Our 13'25" flight left barely enough fuel to taxi to revetment. No planes lost, but one hit dry tanks on Hickam runway.

4/29—(4-day delay, starter repair) 7'40" to Christmas Island. New generator ordered from Hickam.

4/30—Daybreak parts arrival, prompt repair expedited takeoff for Tutuila, Amer. Samoa—8'45" including circling to reduce fuel level because landing gear locking doubted. With Marine planes returning from advance staging base, pilot ordered to land on extreme edge of strip (2/3 of it in bay). Normal landing until right gear collapsed throwing plane toward 35' deep water; left gear failed just in time to grind plane to stop with right wing over water.

4/25-5/25—30 days of best chow in the service (Marine cooks), while Air Corps decided what to do since wrenching of fuselage popped so many rivets; condemned to salvage.

5/25-5/26—1 hour notice to board overloaded ATC C-87, which barely cleared revetment at runway end; 5'15" to Noumea, New Caledonia (crossed International Date Line); 5'45" to Amberly Field, Ipswich, Australia.

5/28—Boarded train Turner described—sandwich/tea meals, hard seat sleepers, 4 nights to Townsville to await assignment of an aircraft . . . 6/3—Orientation flight to Charters Towers; back to Townsville to await assignment of an aircraft . . .

(Editors note: Terrible blow to flyer egos—90 days from Columbia to Charters Towers; Turner made it in 54 days by boat!!!)

A DATE IN DAYTON
September 13-16, 1990
REUNION '90

Headquarters Squadron

Tom Kirby
Representative



To bringing our members up to date on the status of "SAGA OF THE SUN SETTERS", Larry Hickey was contacted and reports steady progress in photo half toning, artwork mapping and writing. While a bit behind schedule, he still projects publication by summer, 1990.

Anyone with information or photos appropriate to the 38th Group history is still encouraged to submit such to Larry Hickey, P.O. Box 3334, High Mar Station, Boulder, CO 80307. At the same time he asks that anyone who has submitted materials please refrain from contacting him about them at this point since stopping to deal with such inquiries takes time from working on the book. All materials will be returned when production of the book is completed.

Larry also reports "Certificates of Authenticity" for Limited Edition Prints are still in the works, and will be mailed automatically to all print purchasers as soon as they are available.

The 823rd Squadron painting, "Alcohol Busters of Formosa", donated by the sponsors to the Air Force Art Collection, has just been published in the USAF Aerospace Education Foundation 1990 calendar as the July artwork. Calendars can be obtained from Foundation at 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Also it and the 822nd Squadron painting were recently displayed in a major Air Force art show in Washington, D.C.

71st Squadron

Charles M. Benbow
Representative



The 71st Squadron Reunion was held in Arlington, VA, September 6-10 with 54 members attending, most accompanied by their wives. Several interesting activities were enjoyed including a van tour of Washington, DC, and an especially memorable trip to the facility where aircraft owned by the Smithsonian Institute are restored for display in the Air and Space Museum. Final event was a banquet at the hotel with Cal Gillespie providing entertainment. Henry Choate served as Reunion Chairman.

Officers elected for the next two years: Charles Benbow, President; Gene Benson, Vice-President; Colin Chilsholm, Secretary, and Jim Reese, Chaplain. The next reunion will be hosted by Gene Benson in Minneapolis in fall, 1991.

Steve J. Kaselak, Euclid, OH, reports "In 1945 on Okinawa, the Wolfpack was stationed near an Ack Ack Gun and Search Light Group. One night when our air raid signal blew, everyone took cover and made sure all lights were out to avoid detection by the Japanese bombers. Among those taking cover were a group of GIs who had been partying and felt no pain as they moved into the darkness. After all lights were out, the search lights of the Ack Ack Group came on. A recently arrived GI who felt very insecure and befuddled, stood up and shouted 'Hey, put 'out those G— D— lights or I'll shoot 'em out. You fool, don't you know there's an air raid on?'"

SEE YOU IN DAYTON

9/13-16/90

405 Squadron
Gerry Carpenter
Representative



CONTROVERSY?

The accuracy of Frank LaMar's article "Lingayen Air Base Out of Action" (Sept. issue) was challenged by Al Barbour in a letter to Sqdn Rep Carpenter that "Capt. Miller", credited as the Armament Officer who warned Lamar and Rolf Laib away from the possible bomb explosion in a damaged aircraft on the runway "does not appear on the 405th roster and Laib did not recall an officer by that name." Carpenter responded with proof positive (below) thereby upholding the integrity of Lamar, the 405th and the newsletter.



Captain Dale "Zombie" Miller and Gerry Carpenter, Lingayen, P.I. Air Strip.

Robert H. Bailey, 405th member in Euclid, OH, writes: "I was assigned to the 345th Bomb Group and flew a few missions with them just before the end of the war. Soon thereafter the "Air Apaches" was deactivated and I was transferred to the 38th BG. We were moved to Fukuoka, Japan, and flew off Ashiya airfield until the airstrip at Fukuoka was resurfaced.

"They recruited volunteers for a detachment to go to Ashiya to pickle the B-25s as we were getting in the A-26s. When I arrived at Ashiya, I was assigned as Adjutant to the Maintenance Department and also served as one of three group test pilots until departing for the States about 25 months later.

Bailey included several photos for possible use in the newsletter, one of which is the mystery photo on page 2.

822nd Squadron

Clifford H. Sutherland
Representative



Jim Thoren, Clinton, WA, sent along a couple experiences, two of which follow:

"The 822nd (and the 38th) were sent to Morotai for about a month after the war ended, and I and a fellow named Henderson were flying to get time for pay. We had taken a run over the Halamaharas Islands where some Japanese were still firing away. We had taken a Squadron Leader from an Aussie Spitfire outfit with us and

822nd SQUADRON (Cont'd)

let him fly on the deck for a little strafing. He thought it was great. Upon return to Morotai, couldn't get the gear down so belled in on the coral strip with practically no damage to the aircraft other than sudden engine stoppage and bent props. The Aussie latter offered me a ride in a Spit but I didn't have the guts to take him up as I had very little single engine time.

"We were also sent to Palawan for the missions against Balikpapan, Borneo. While there a Japanese Nike fighter was restored and a Major from the 13th Air Force (I think) decided to fly it. An old timer crew chief and a couple of others helped him start it. They had to hand crank it like an old Stearman, but finally got it going and the crew chief advised the Major to be sure and lock the tail wheel before taking off—but the Major forgot and promptly ground-looped off the runway, washing out the gear and props. The crew chief told him in no uncertain terms where he could shove the aircraft when the Major suggested they rebuild it again.

"As a sidelight to this, as I was watching the event I turned to the man standing next to me, and he turned out to be an old friend and schoolmate from Seattle—Robert Durocher (now of Twisp, WA) a waist gunner in the 13th AF B-25 outfit—and neither of us even knew the other was in the service.

"All my original crew members are still alive, still married to the same women, and we communicate at Christmas each year—Lloyd Bolton, pilot; Jim Lundh, tail gunner; Joe Tschetter, engineer; Doug Martin, navigator; John Negrey, radioman. Some are listed as squadron unknown, but were in the 71st or 823rd after they broke our crew up."

823rd Squadron

Al West
Representative



Bill Hanrahan has apparently been looking through his "Escape from the Jungle" handbook again:

"The emergency list of items and medical supplies suggested by the publication for every crew member to be stored in the parachute back pack was extensive and would have looked like the bottom of a collection drawer in our kitchen. The medical components contained everything but an anaesthetic. Can you imagine using castor oil in the jungle? They should have issued corks. Oh, Yes! Spare ammunition for the 45 caliber pistol—most crew members felt lucky to hit a large barrel at 25 feet with that weapon. One of our pilots would never carry the 45—he was afraid the Japanese might insist upon inserting the gun into an uncomfortable portion of his anatomy if he were captured.

"The psychological affect of the book was rather adverse when superstitious actions could sometimes affect our hopes of survival. In other words if you did not prepare, you would not need it, or, as some of our young people would express the situation, 'To hell with it:—it won't happen to me.'"

(Editor's note: We much appreciate Bill's comments on the war, but both Al and I are wondering "What the heck were the rest of the 823rd doing?" We hear so little from them, we have to assume they were fighting a different war. Get with it, fellas—let Al hear from you.)