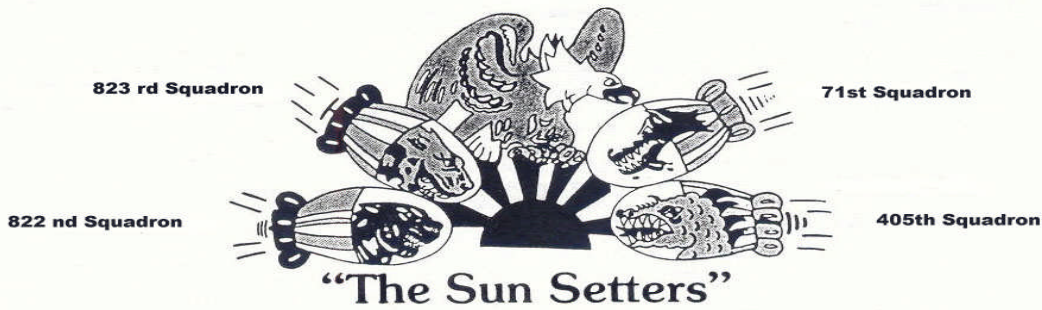


38th Bomb Group



**THE 38TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION (WW II) MAY 2012**



**FROM OUR PRESIDENT - HIP—HIP—HOORAY!!!  
38th BG "LIMITED EDITION" HAS BEEN PUBLISHED**

I have received many e-mails and phone calls which relate how happy members were to finally receive "THE BOOK" and how impressed they were with the quality.

It was a long, hard, and expensive fight to get the book published before all of our WW II members passed away. During the seven years it has been my lot, I have written close to 150 condolence letters to the families of our deceased war-time comrades. Most of the credit for the book goes to the committee - Chick Alford, Orland Gage, David Gunn, Al Kennedy, and myself. Al Kennedy was our point man, and his son, Michael, did a super job editing and laying out the book.

It is important to note that we are only authorized to sell our "Limited Edition" to: (1) men who served with the 38th during WW II, plus their family members and (2) people who were members of the 38th Bomb Group Association and their family members.

If you have not validated your address for the book or if you want a book and have not paid for it, contact Orland Gage, 337 Reservoir Dr., Lewiston, ID 83501. His e-mail address is: [ogage@cableone.net](mailto:ogage@cableone.net)

If you have not ordered a book, better order it now before they are gone.

**38th BG WEBSITE:** Tom Behrens has once again enhanced our website which will continue to perpetuate our legacy long after our 38th BG Association stops operating on 31 December of this year. Tom will continue to maintain the site which is financed to the year 2016. Please continue to send tapes and/or DVD interviews to Tom at:

**TomBehrensUSA.com** Check our website: [www.sunsetters38bg.com](http://www.sunsetters38bg.com)  
YOU WILL LIKE IT!!!

**38TH BG FREINDSHIP MEETING 2012:** Jack Bleuler and Bill Page are planning our Fall "Friendship Meeting" and details will be provided in a separate letter.

**In closing, remember to say a prayer for our troops who are currently in harms way fighting for this great country of ours. May they return home safely.**

*Jack DeTour*

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**ALERT  
THE 38TH BG  
WILL BE DIS-  
BANDED ON  
31 DEC 2012**

**IN EVER HONORED MEMORY**

Our President has furnished the following list of named member comrades who have passed on to their final Post as reported to him since our previous listing. Their names have been added to the list of our "Ever Honored Comrades".

Berget, Arleigh M.	71st	Borla, Harold C.	822nd	TOTAL TO DATE	Headquarters	22
Filpitt, Marshal F.	71st	Stallsmith, Roy L.	822nd		69 <sup>th</sup> Squadron	3
Gervase, Edward M.	71st			70 <sup>th</sup> Squadron	64	
				71 <sup>st</sup> Squadron	183	
Laib, Rolf A.	405th	Coyne, Richard "Rip"	823rd	89 <sup>th</sup> Squadron	1	
Middlebrook, Garrett	405th			405 <sup>th</sup> Squadron	218	
Zleniak, Boris	405th	Mountain, Keith	unkn.	822 <sup>nd</sup> Squadron	114	
				823 <sup>rd</sup> Squadron	114	
				Honorary	1	
				Unit unknown	4	

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We solicit your comments or notes of errors and the submittal of your stories or items of interest. We reserve the right to reject items and the right to edit items for space and suitability.

We also reserve the right to alter names or other details that might cause embarrassment to individuals or family members.

I live close enough to San Diego that some of those older military planes that offer rides to civilians who wish they could be fighter pilots, fly over this cove in the back country hills of Southern California. I wish often that I was up there. I guess it has been in the blood of men for eons. Leonardo da Vinci played with that idea and Greek mythologists wrote about that dream.

Me, I was building stick model rubber band powered model airplanes about the time "Lindy" flew to Paris. When Will Rogers and Wiley Post crashed in Alaska, my brother and I rode our bikes about our little country town with placards telling the news. I had a cousin who was an Aviation Cadet at March field in the early 30s and when we visited him, we stood in the prop wash of a Ford Tri-Motor warming up on the parking ramp.

After I returned from the war, I would rush into the yard or to the office windows when I heard the distinctive sound of a B-25 - all too often it was an A-26.

Several years ago I went to an air show at Brown Field south of San Diego. There were several B-25s on display. I was standing near one when they moved the crowd back and started the engines. My heart raced with excitement. Then they taxied it way over to the end of the runway.

I raced through the crowd as fast as I could toward the fence near the runway, getting there in time to see them take off. After a few trips around the pattern, the pilot came in "fast and low" over the runway and "pulled" it up in a "fighter" approach. Up in the pattern, he turned and followed another plane in to a landing.

I watched all that through teary eyes - reliving some of my own experiences in former years.

So it was that my heart did flips when I read the story that Victor Smith sent me last June. When I came across it again a few weeks ago, I JUST HAD TO put it into the news letter (page 3). Thanks, Victor!!

Send me some more stories. I'll twist Orland's arm to let me include them all in the remaining news letters (If I get the stories, I'll twist Orland's arm into doing two more before we close down.).

Our book, I am plugging my way through it. Every night when I close my copy, I shake my head and wonder how come I am still here. Only by the grace of God did my crew and the Bill Smith/Jim Wallace crew live to tell the tale of the American Beachhead on Tibi Island. I am sure the Japs knew where we were. Our tracks to the bottom of the bank were clearly visible in the mud for a quarter of a mile leading right up to the 8-foot embankment we were hiding on top of. Their small patrol had found the tracks on the day following our ditching. They would have been out at the next low tide after we were rescued with a small force to search for us. TIMING IS EVERYTHING, the say!

The 38th lost one crew and plane over the target that day. They lost two planes in the waters just north of Tarakan after leaving the target. They lost a fourth plane which was so damaged that it could not return to Morotai after making a fuel emergency landing at Dipalog (Code name that day - "Sail boat")

In my rambling through the shelves of WWII history in libraries and book stores, I am often frustrated that so little attention is given to the air war in the Pacific. I was killing time recently at Barnes and Noble and discovered a book about the air war in the Pacific that even mentions the 38th Bomb Group. It contains a better account of Col. Hawes last mission than OUR BOOK.. Check it out: "WHIRLWIND, The Air War Against Japan, 1942-1946," by Barrett Tillman.

### THE BOOK IS HERE!!

THE SUN SETTERS OF THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC arrived at Al Kennedy's shop in Pennsylvania late on Tuesday, April 17. His staff almost immediately began to apply labels, which had been prepared by Orland Gage, to the already packaged copies of the book and 227 copies taken to the Post Office on the morning of the 18th.

David Gunn, in San Diego, received his copies on the 25th. Jack DeTour had to wait until May 5 for his book.

In the mean time reactions, mostly very favorable to ecstatic, have been flowing in. A very few grumbles have been heard because “that report isn't so.” Of course, if there is more than one report of an event, there are going to be differences and the authors had to take what they had. In such cases, they rarely had information needed to try to check out the variances.

So the book has the story of the valiant efforts, strange and funny moments in the life of the men in the 38th. Your newsletter editor has found it almost unbelievable that he actually survived.

If you ordered a book through Orland, you should have received it by now. If you haven't received your book, get in contact with Orland at once. If you never requested a refund from Larry Hickey so that you can buy this book, start heating up the U.S. Mails to Hickey.

We already know of people who want extra books. As Orland has reported in his item below, there are only 120 unsold copies and when they are gone, THAT'S IT, THE END, FINISH!!!

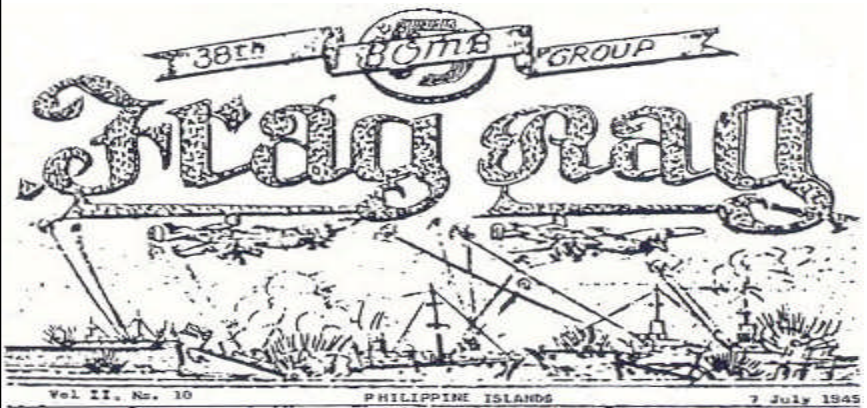
### SECRETARY/TREASURER

I have received enthusiastic accounts of our book, THE SUN SETTERS OF THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC. My copy meets my hopes for an outstanding account of the 38th's activities in WW II. I have people now asking if they can purchase extra copies. We have about 120 unsold copies and when they are gone, there will be no more unless Mr. Hickey publishes The Saga of the Sun Setters. My copies were received on Monday, 23 April.

I have asked all of you for an updated mailing address because we will publish a final roster with the September issue of **The Sun Setters.**

#### FINANCIAL REPORT

Beginning Value, 20 January 2012	\$44,265.29
Additions	13,230.38
Withdrawals	20,421.11
Plus Interest	.97
Ending Value	37,095.53



### IT'S THE SOUND AND SIGHT

(This is a good little story about the vivid memory of a P-51 and its pilot, by a fellow who was 12 years old in Canada in 1967.)

It was to take to the air. They said it had flown in during the night from some U. S. airport, the pilot had been tired. I marveled at the size of the plane dwarfing the Pipers and Canucks tied down by her. It was much bigger than in the movies. She glistened in the sun like the bulwark of security from days gone by.

The pilot arrived by cab, paid the driver, then stepped into the pilot's lounge. He was an older man; his wavy hair was gray and tossed. It looked like it had been combed, say, around the turn of the century. His flight jacket was checked, creased and worn - it smelled old and genuine. Old Glory was prominently sewn to its shoulders. He projected a quiet air of proficiency and pride devoid of arrogance.

He filed a quick flight plan to Montreal (Expo-67, Air Show) then walked across the tarmac.

After taking several minutes to perform his walk-around check, the pilot returned to the flight lounge to ask if anyone would be available to stand by with fire extinguishers while he “flashed the old bird up, just to be safe.”

Though only 12 at the time, I was allowed to stand by with an extinguisher after brief instructions - “If you see fire, point, then pull this lever.” (I later became a firefighter, but that's another story). The air around the exhaust manifolds shimmered like a mirror from fuel fumes as the huge prop started to rotate. One manifold, then another, and yet another barked - I stepped back with the others. In moments the Packard-built Merlin engine came to life with a thunderous roar, blue flames knifed from her manifolds.

I looked at the other faces, there was no concern. I lowered the bell of my extinguisher. One of the guys signaled to walk back to the lounge, We did.

Several minutes later we could hear the pilot doing his pre flight run up. He taxied to the end of runway 19, out of sight. All went quiet for several seconds, we raced from the lounge to the second story deck to see if we could catch a glimpse of the P-51 as she started down the runway. We could not.

There we stood, eyes fixed to a spot half way down 19. Then a roar ripped across the field, much louder than before, like a furious hell spawn set loose - something mighty was coming this way. “Listen to that thing!” said the controller.

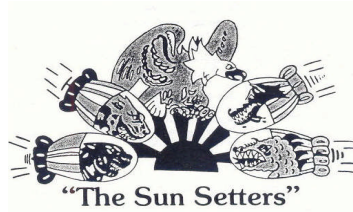
In seconds the Mustang burst into our line of sight. Its tail was already off and it was moving faster than anything I had ever seen by that point on 19. Two thirds of the way down 19 the mustang was airborne with her gear going up. The prop tips were supersonic; we clasped our ears as the Mustang climbed hellish fast into the circuit to be eaten up by the dog-day haze.

We stood for moments in stunned silence trying to digest what we'd just seen. The radio controller rushed by me to the radio. “**Kingston**

*(Continued, page 4)*

# "THE SUN SETTERS"

337 W. Reservoir Drive  
Lewiston, ID 83501-8608



## ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

### IT'S THE SOUND AND SIGHT

*tower calling Mustang?*" He looked back at us as he waited for an acknowledgement.

The radio crackled, "*Go ahead Kingston.*"

*"Roger, Mustang. Kingston tower would like to advise the circuit is clear for a low level pass."*

I stood in shock because the controller had, more or less, just asked the pilot to return for an impromptu air show!

The controller looked at us. "What?" He asked. "I can't let that guy go without asking. I couldn't forgive myself."

The radio cackled once again, "*Kingston, do I have permission for a low level pass, east to west, across the field?*"

*"Roger, Mustang, the circuit is clear for an east to west pass."*

*"Roger, Kingston, I'm coming out of 3000 feet, stand by."*

We rushed back onto the second-story deck, eyes fixed toward the eastern haze. The sound was subtle at first, a high pitched whine, a muffled screech, a distant scream.

Moments later the P-51 burst through the haze. Her airframe straining against positive G's and gravity, wing tips spilling contrails of condensed air, prop-tips again supersonic as the burnished bird blasted across the eastern margin of the field shredding and tearing the air.

At about 500 mph and 150 yards from where we stood she passed with an American pilot saluting. Imagine! A salute!

I felt like crying, she glistened, she screamed, the building shook, my heart pounded. Then the old pilot pulled her up and rolled, and rolled, and rolled out of sight into the broken clouds and indelibly into my memory. I've never wanted to be an American more than on that day.

It was a time when many nations looked to America as their big brother, a steady and even-handed beacon of security who navigated difficult political waters with grace and style; not unlike the pilot who'd just flown into my memory.

He was proud, not arrogant. Humble, not a braggart, old and honest, projecting an aura of America at its best. That America will return one day, I know it will. Until that time, I'll just send off this story; call it a reciprocal salute, to the old American who wove a memory for a young Canadian that's lasted a lifetime.

- - - - -

The editor thanks Victor Smith for sending this story. Every time I read it, chills run up and down my spine and my pulse rate soars. But there is a subliminal message in the story that calls us once again to man the parapets in defense of the honor and sacred values that made us the object of desire for millions trodden down by selfish and wicked leaders. Our freedom has cost much in every generation since 1776. We dare not treat it lightly.