



THE 380TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
5th AF - RAAF

AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS

The Flying Circus



NEWSLETTER #38

Spring 2009



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DATES: October 14-18, 2009

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Barbara J. Gotham
Phone: 765/463-5390
Email: bjgotham@gmail.com

Next issue: Summer 2009
(to be mailed in July)

IN MEMORIUM -- THOMAS HUNT

A Tribute to Tom Hunt

As we all well know, Tom Hunt was one of our most respected and influential members of our 380th Bomb Group Association over most of its life and at the same time he was equally friendly to each and every one of us.

Although he would never accept a named governing position in the Association, he always had the right interpretation of any problems our organization incurred and had an apt proposed solution to each. Never pushy with his opinion, he would drop the right word or explanation at the right time to quickly solve our then present need.

With his very wide contacts he was most useful in picking and attaining our annual meeting sites and in getting the best arrangements for them.

As Operations Sergeant of the 531st Squadron and of Group he was deeply involved with our Flying Operations, both combat and training.

With his astonishing memory he was able to discuss all elements of our operational history with all of us. This directed and amplified many of our "war story" discussions and kept the "claims" being made from being too overblown.

I'm sure we will all remember Tom on all occasions when we are recalling 380th and its members in our memories.

As we will all agree, our time in the 380th, at our then younger age, will always be one of the highest and probably most remembered periods in our lives, and Tom Hunt will always be one of those compatriots who will readily come to mind.
.. Ted Williams



Photos below and to the right provided by Kathleen Clements (Marvin Gardner's daughter)
Top right: Marvin Gardner & Tom
Bottom photos: Tom at 380th Reunions

Photo above of Tom & Ted Williams (2002 Reunion)

Dear Barbara

How sad to hear of the passing of Tom Hunt. We had a telephone conversation with him shortly before the reunion and he assured us he would be there. My friendship with Tom goes back to the 1992 reunion in Australia. We were fellow "oil workers" and knew many of the same people in the industry. I have had many conversations with Tom each year at the reunions and will miss him greatly.

His commanding southern drawl just seemed to be a natural part of each reunion. How sad.

Sincerely,
Lyle Sears

IN MEMORIUM -- THOMAS HUNT



Bachelor's Brothel

Back row (L/R): Unknown, Steve Rankin (co-pilot), Gene Fiori (waist gunner), John Otto (navigator), Fred Low (pilot), Prisoner-of-war (Sgt Banks ?), Phil Carmen (tail gunner), George Schauman (radio operator)
Front row (L/R): Dan Bruen (bombardier), Bill Galaher (top gunner), Bob Mayer (flight engineer), Tom Hunt (observer), Unknown, John Murphy (nose gunner)

Dear Barbara

This picture was very important to Tom [Hunt] and he spent about two years looking for it.

We were so saddened to hear he had passed away. I just wish we had known he was sick so we could have sent him cards to let him know he was in our thoughts.

Thanks for all your work to keep the 380th Reunion going. We had so many memorable times, but we just got old.

Fred and Betty Low

380TH VISORS

I now have visors with THE FLYING CIRCUS printed on them available to 380th members! They are bright pink with blue lettering and white with blue lettering. See photos below. Cost is \$15 each - contact Barb Gotham, 130 Colony Road, West Lafayette IN 47906 if you would like one!

To see color versions, please go to:
<http://380th.org/NEWS/News38/News38.html>



2009 REUNION INFORMATION

The 2009 Reunion will be held in Savannah, Georgia, October 14-18, 2009

Here are the arrangements made by Barb Gotham (2009 Reunion Coordinator) for the 2009 Reunion:

Hotel: Holiday Inn Savannah West, 103 San Drive, Pooler, GA

Rooms rates:

One King Standard or Two Queen Standard: \$89.00/night (plus 13% room tax)

One King Suite or Two Queen Suite: \$99.00/night (plus 13% room tax)

Same rates apply 3 days prior and 3 days after our event

To reserve a room (or rooms) directly with the hotel, please go to our 2009 Reunion website:

<http://380th.org/REUNION/2009Reunion/Reunion.htm>

to find the hotel reservation link (it is too long to print here!).

Events:

Wednesday, October 14 -	Afternoon registration, optional tours, dinner on own
Thursday, October 15 -	Registration, optional tours, welcome dinner at hotel
Friday, October 16 -	11:00-11:30 AM, Memorial Service at Chapel of the Fallen Eagles, at the 8th AF Museum 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM, Luncheon in the Art Gallery at the 8th AF Museum 1:00-3:00 PM, Group Tours of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Dinner on own
Saturday, October 17 -	9:00 AM, Group meeting/presentations at hotel Afternoon, Optional tours 6:00 PM, Cocktails, dinner/dance at hotel
Sunday, October 18 -	Departure

NOTES:

<i>HOTEL AND EVENT REGISTRATION FORMS WILL BE PRINTED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER (SUMMER 2009)</i>

By the date of our reunion, all guest rooms at the Holiday Inn will be smoke-free.

Trolley service is available from the hotel to downtown and midtown Savannah.

There are several trolley tour companies offering various sightseeing packages in Savannah: architecture, black heritage, ghosts, Civil War, land & sea, coastal heritage, maritime -- as well as walking and riverboat tours. Fort Pulaski, Old Fort Jackson, beaches, and Tybee Island are nearby.

For those who attended the Tucson reunion, please note that there has been a change in the Friday schedule above from what you received in your packets: the group tours will now be after lunch, rather than before the Memorial Service, to allow more time at the exhibits.

If you have any suggestions for optional group tours, etc., please contact Barb Gotham, the 2009 Reunion Coordinator.

FUTURE 380TH REUNIONS

In response to the survey in the last newsletter regarding future 380th Reunions, the majority of those responding would like to see them continue. We should plan on a discussion at the Savannah Reunion (October 2009) to discuss this further (questions are (1) whether we should continue only as long as the veterans themselves are able to attend, and (2) do the families of the veterans want to continue with reunions to keep the memory of the 380th alive?).

The Midwestern city with the most votes is Branson, Missouri, with a tie between Colorado Springs and Albuquerque for a Western location.

Let's go with Branson for 2010, and then decide at this year's reunion (Savannah) if we should continue with a reunion in 2011 (and if so, where!).

Barb Gotham will get some information from Branson, try to take a site visit there during August or September, to be able to report on our options there at the Savannah reunion in October and also in the Fall newsletter.

Suggestions/comments? Contact Barb at bjgotham@gmail.com, or send a letter to: 130 Colony Road, West Lafayette IN 47906-1209.

DISTRIBUTION OF 380TH REUNION LOCATIONS (1981 to Present)



Compiled by Bill Bever

Arizona - 3	Tucson 3
Colorado - 3	Denver 2, Colorado Springs 1
Ohio - 3	Dayton 3
Texas - 3	El Paso 1, San Antonio 2
California - 2	San Diego 2
Florida - 2	Orlando 1, Panama City 1
New York - 2	Plattsburg 2
Virginia - 2	Norfolk 1, Williamsburg 1
Maryland - 1	District of Columbia, Wash. D.C.
Georgia - 1	Savannah
Massachusetts - 1	Boston
Nebraska - 1	Omaha
Tennessee - 1	Nashville
Utah - 1	Salt Lake City
Washington - 1	Seattle
Wisconsin - 1	Oshkosh

East of Mississippi = 14 Cities in 9 different states
West of Mississippi = 14 Cities in 7 different states

Reunions were held in 16 of the 50 states

MAIL CALL

From: Bob Alford <bo.balford@hotmail.com>
To: Barbara Gotham <bjgotham@gmail.com>
Fri, Feb 20, 2009 at 4:30 AM
Subject: Russ Brooks

Hi Barb,

I got the last 380th newsletter when I arrived back home in Thailand from Darwin and saw the mention of Russ Brooks' death. Can I add an amendment please?

Russ was born on 25 August 1923 and later joined the RAAF, where he trained as a bomb aimer on B-24 Liberators. He was posted as a Pilot Officer to No. 24 Squadron, a part of No. 82 Wing based at Fenton in 1944. He flew missions over the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia) including one against the power houses on Java and another against a Japanese naval force. Russ was bombing leader on a number of those missions. He also flew with 24 Squadron from Morotai and Palawan before being demobilised as a Flying Officer in 1945.

Postwar Russ and a business partner founded what became a very successful ceramic production business, and though Russ retired a number of years ago he maintained an active role in the company. He attended the 50th Anniversary of the B-24 Liberator at Fort Worth in 1989 and this led to his regular attendance at the 380th reunions where he and his wife 'Tiny' became firm friends of many of the 'Flying Circus' veterans and their families.

Russ passed away peacefully on 25 October 2008.

Aaaand that's all. I suspect Russ's details are also in the volumes WE WENT TO WAR that Ted compiled with Russ' and my help.

Cheers,
Bob A.

From: Steven W. Whaley
Thu, Jan 29, 2009 at 10:08 AM
To: Ted Williams, Copy: Barb Gotham

Dear Mr. Williams & Mrs. Gotham

My name is Steven W. Whaley, and I'm writing a book about WWII and its lingering losses. Through my first book about my uncle who served on a LST (Landing Ship-Tank) in the Pacific, I met Arliss (Millikin) Hogue who worked at the Seneca shipyard in Northern Illinois. Her brother-Samuel Thomas Millikin-was MIA after the B-24 that he was on (Plane ID 42-40814 529th Squadron) was lost on a routine flight over the Owen Stanley range from Nadzab to Port Morseby, Papua New Guinea.

Samuel has three older sisters (Arliss, Dorothy, and Delight) all still alive and still missing him after all these years. They hope that he survived and that he has his own tribe in the mountains (he was a good looking young man). I'm hoping that someone in the association might have met Sam and had some memories about him that they could share. The B-24 that Sam was on was from the V Bomber Command Replacement Center and was piloted by Robert W. Tosch. I got this info from the TAPS section on your webpage for the 380th.

Any contacts or info about Sam would be greatly appreciated including pictures, flight plans, etc. I plan on putting this info in my second book about my uncle, Dad, and stepfather who all served in the Pacific in WWII. There are still 80,000 MIAs from WWII, and I want people to know that they are still sorely missed. Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,

Steven Whaley
608 Manchester Dr. , Kewanee, IL 61443
309-219-4515
whaley_steven_w@cat.com

If anyone has any information on Samuel (Sammy) Millikin, please contact Barb Gotham or Mr. Whaley directly.

MAIL CALL

From: Steven Heinlein
To: Bill Shek
Date: Wed, 11 Mar 2009 12:17:14 -0000
Subject: 380 BG History ?

Bill,

I have a request for you. The wing built a new Flightline Dining Facility, and we received a "Name the Diner" idea submitted below. I was asked to find out more information about 1Lt Heet. I found the website <http://380th.org/HISTORY/Group/GroupHQ-roster.html#H> with lots of names and it appears the following two were the first Mess Officers.

Could you check with the 380 BG Association Historians (or other members) if they knew a 1Lt Donald Heet, Ground Staff, Administration, Group Mess Officer Nov '44? Also, Capt William Schiff was a Ground Staff, Mess, Group Mess Officer in Feb '44.

I'm also interested if anyone remembers these officers serving at Fenton Australia, or if not, then the name of the Fenton's Mess Officer. Or maybe someone knows if the Fenton's Dining Facility had a special name.

Thank you.

Maj Heinlein
Historian
380th Air Expeditionary Wing (AEW)
Steven.Heinlein@adab.afcent.af.mil

-----Original Message-----

From: Gilbert, Tracey A CTR 380 ECES/CEOP
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2009 3:54 PM
Subject: Roy's Diner Rename

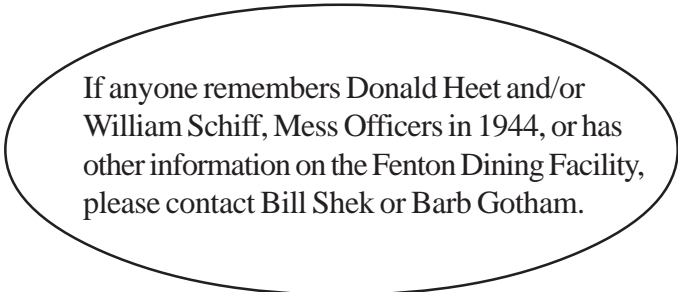
Chief,

I think the name should be "D.G. Heet Diner" named after Heet, Donald G. 1LT, Ground Staff, Administration, Group Mess Officer 380th Bombardment Group (Heavy), Fifth Bomber Command, 4 Nov 44, Davis-Monthan Air Field.

This appears to be the first Mess officer for the 380th, ever!

Plus, "Heet" is a play on words for something this place has a lot of and let's face it ... This place has plenty of heat in the summer!!!!

Tracey A. Gilbert
Alternate Site Manager
380 ECES/CEOP/DYNCORP
United Arab Emirates



If anyone remembers Donald Heet and/or William Schiff, Mess Officers in 1944, or has other information on the Fenton Dining Facility, please contact Bill Shek or Barb Gotham.

MAIL CALL

From: Bob Meyers <bmeyers780@aol.com>
To: Bill Shek (with copy to Barb Gotham)
Wed, Feb 18, 2009 at 7:27 PM
380th Bomb Group Presentation and "Witchcraft" Flight

Dear Bill

I read your letter in the last issue of the 380th Bomb Group Association newsletter (Winter 2008/2009) in which you extend a kind offer to provide a copy of your presentation to the 2008 Association Reunion and of a video of your B-24 flight. My wife and I gave my father a membership to the 380th Bomb Group Association and he enjoys reading the newsletter very much. I'm sure he would also enjoy viewing the presentation and video as well. Dad (Waldo W. Meyers) was a radio operator/mechanic in the 528th squadron (Corrado's Crew). They had to bail out of "Daddy of 'em All" into the Sulu Sea on July 1, 1945.

Dad and I just got back from a visit to Chandler, AZ, where he re-united with Herman "Rudy" Corrado and his lovely wife after 60 years. Several of their neighbors asked if they could just listen in while the two of them recounted their experiences in the South Pacific. It was a truly gratifying experience to witness these two extraordinary gentlemen share memories of a momentous time in their lives and in our history.

Please let me know if there is anything I need to send you (shipping/handling/etc.) for the materials. Our mailing address is: Waldo W. Meyers, c/o Robert Meyers, 212 Mountain Drive, Pittsfield, MA, 01201.

Thank you very much for your generosity.

Bob Meyers

P.S. - I have attached a photo of Dad and I in front of "Witchcraft" when it visited Pittsfield in October of last year.

Thu, Feb 26, 2009 at 10:55 PM

Hi Barbara

Dad said it would be fine for you to use the email and photo. (I gave him your best wishes.)

He noticed in the Winter 2008/2009 newsletter that the newsletter sent to William C. Tiernan had been returned. Dad is hopeful that someone will respond to your request for an address and it will show up in a future newsletter. "Wild Bill," as he was called by Dad and pilot Herman "Rudy" Corrado, was the crew's copilot and apparently quite a character. Dad described one occasion when he was called on the carpet for buzzing the mess hall so closely on a practice flight that rust from the metal roof fell on all the tables and floor inside. Dad had tried unsuccessfully before to locate him and would love to make contact with him again.



Thank you for the good work you do. It must be gratifying to know that your efforts mean so much to a very special and deserving group.

Sincerely,

Bob Meyers

MAIL CALL

Sun, Mar 1, 2009 at 1:15 AM

Subject: Waldo Meyers and Rudy Corrado

Hi Barb

I received a nice card today from a couple in Chandler (neighbors of Rudy and Norma Corrado) that listened to Dad and Rudy's remembrances when we visited last month. They enclosed photos of the two of them. It made me think that if you were going to include my earlier email in a future newsletter, you may also be interested in a photo of Dad and Rudy. I have attached one in case you want to use it. Waldo is on the left Rudy is on the right.

Take care, Bob Meyers



WWII Registry

April 6, 2009

It would be good if we had a list of 380th personnel that are listed.

Bill Shek is listed.

Bill Casselberry

IF YOU KNOW OF ANY 380TH MEMBERS LISTED IN THIS REGISTRY, PLEASE LET US KNOW SO A LIST CAN BE MADE OF THEM.

If you have time and would like to check which of our members are listed in this registry, please let Barb Gotham know - she can give you a list of members to check!



World War II Honoree

World War II Veteran



William W. Casselberry

BRANCH OF SERVICE
U.S. Army Air Forces

HOMETOWN
San Angelo, TX

HONORED BY
Margaret Casselberry Shirey,
Sister



ACTIVITY DURING WWII
GROUND STAFF; ENGINEERING, MAINTENANCE, LINE CHIEF 750; SHEK'S
OVERSEAS CREW.

National WWII Registry

The memory of America's World War II generation is preserved within the physical memorial and through the World War II Registry of Remembrances, an individual listing of Americans who contributed to the war effort. Any U.S. citizen who helped win the war, whether a veteran or someone on the home front, is eligible for the Registry.

To search for veterans in the registry or to add an honoree, go to:

<http://www.wwiimemorial.com/>

MAIL CALL

From: Dick Dow
To: Bill Shek (copy to: Barbara Gotham)
Date: Thu, 26 Feb 2009 14:15:23 -0800
Subject: My uncle Lt.Wilbur Morris 380th/530th "Red Ass" pilot

Dear William,

I went to the 380th Org news site this morning find a place where I could report the death of my uncle Wilbur Morris at 3:00am this morning. You mentioned Redding, CA as the home of your father at one time. My uncle lived in Fortuna, CA, which is almost due west of Redding and is near the coast. My uncle was one of the original members of the original 380th BG. His crew was the only crew from the 530th Squadron, maybe even the 380th BG, to be shot down, captured and to spend 22 months in POW camps in Japan, including Zentsuji and Rokuroshi where he was repatriated on Sept 5, 1945.

I was fortunate enough ten years ago to be watching an interview with Steven Ambrose talking about the declining number of WWII veterans and the importance of preserving their history. I have gotten wonderful accounts by my uncle and a tremendous amount of other information from the internet. I thought I might be able to compile all of the information for my family members before his passing, but I failed. He has a brother named Orval who is 96 and a sister (my mother) Leila who is 86. I really thought I had more time.
Alas, no!

Wilbur would have been 90 in May. He was diagnosed with liver cancer in November. He hung in there for a few more months than had been expected. I intend to complete the organization of all the information I have gathered so far and send it to the remaining family members. Ironically, former Speaker of the House James Wright wrote a book called the "Flying Circus" that I purchased and read a few years ago. Wright's tent was adjacent to my Uncle's which is described in the book. When my uncle's plane (he was piloting "Little Joe" when shot down near the Kai Islands) crashed, his navigator Skuzinski was killed when the ball turret broke loose and crushed him in his seat. Skuzinski was the best friend and Navigator school classmate of James Wright. The two pet dogs that Morris and Skuzinski had in their tent were adopted by James Wright in their absence. Wright excitedly called me after a message had been forwarded to him by Ted Williams at Purdue Univ. I wanted to purchase a copy of Wright's book and have it autographed for my uncle. After speaking with Wright and giving him my uncle's phone number, he called him. It was a great gesture!

I'm really anxious to return to the work that needs to be done on my uncle's WWII service history and you have spurred me on. Thank you.

Thank you for your condolences and a special thanks to Ted Williams for his past help in my research. Wilbur Morris was a very special part of our family.

Dick Dow
Fresno, CA



Wilbur L. Morris
May 25, 1919-February 26, 2009

If anyone has information for Dick Dow, please contact him by email at dickdow@extch.com or contact Barb Gotham or Bill Shek who will relay your message.

"THE OLD AIRFIELD"

From: Doug Tilley <dtalley5@bigpond.com>
To: Barbara Gotham <bjgotham@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Dec 1, 2008 at 6:34 PM

I found a poem on the 95th's website, and have changed it around a bit, the left one is the original and the right one is my version; hope you like it.

The Old Airfield

Strolling through these fields so green
Where once a throng of life has been
A feeling so evoked in me
Of sadness amidst tranquillity

For beneath where now grows golden corn
Bonds as strong as steel were born
Laughter, tears and stories shared
Amongst the comrades of the air

And as on concrete strips I tread
The backbone from whence missions led
I can almost hear the roar
As engines to the heavens soar

"We count them out, we count them in"
Through the ever ascending din
This, by those who watched and cared
For men whose lives might not be spared

Day after day, night after night
Into another enduring flight
The hardcore now so cracked and worn
Each tell a story for those who mourn

Yet now looking up to the clear night sky
Over the airfield to stars on high
I feel sure that in this patchwork of land
Our faithful friends stretch out their hands

This land which now yields sheaves of gold
Will forever breathe a life of old
Never forget – they came, they went
And for you and me their lives were spent.

Kate Kirkum
95thBG Horham U.K.
May 2004

The Old Airfield Fenton

Strolling along the Airfield so dry
Where once a throng of life has been
A feeling so evoked in me
Of sadness and almost began to cry

For beneath where now I stand
Bonds as strong as steel were born
Laughter, tears and stories shared
Amongst the comrades of the land

And as on sealed strips I tread
The backbone from whence missions led
I can almost hear the Pratt & Whitney's roar
As the B-24s to the heavens soar

They counted them out, they counted them in
Through the ever ascending din
This, by those who watched and cared
For men whose lives might not be spared

Day after day, night after night
Into another enduring flight
The hardcore now so cracked and worn
Each tell a story for those who mourn

Yet now looking up to the clear blue sky
Over the airfield where bombers were high
I feel sure that in this patchwork of lands
Our faithful 380th stretch out their hands

This airfield which now is now in silence
No more the men endure violence
Never forget – they came, they went
And for you and me their lives were spent.

Doug Tilley
Adelaide River
December 2008

PHOTO GALLERY



Photo provided by Jim Cernick

From: Jim Cernick
To: Barb Gotham
Tue, Mar 3, 2009 at 4:53 PM

Hi Barb,

Here's a photo I found on e-Bay. I don't have any info on it, but it looks like the guy broke up a great collection and sold them individually. The pics that weren't noseart he sold in a group of 80 for \$69.00, lots of people pics too. Breaking up the albums has become quite the norm and I hate it. I'm guessing that it's like the sign with the Flying Circus pic I sent you awhile back that nobody remembers, late war Philippines I'm sure. Promise, some pics are coming, working on it, workin' workin':) ttyl, Jim

23 Sept 08

Dear Barbara,

I enclose two photos which I hope you will publish.

(a) Tommy and Helen [Thompson] at the October 1988 unveiling of the plaque at Fenton, Australia.

(b) The plaque at Fenton, Australia, 1988. Both Dot (my wife) and I attended to Re-union and we enjoyed meeting our American friends and the Re-union.

David Sieber
Daniella, Western Australia



The photo to the left was taken in October 2008 by Doug Tilley during a visit to Fenton Field. Still looks to be in good shape after 20 years!

DREAM TIME - A WAR STORY

Installment #8

by Roger W. Caputo

This is a story of one person's experience in World War II and the title grows out of the time served on the Continent of Australia (the term "Dream Time" is borrowed from the Australian Aborigine use of the term to describe the distant past of mankind). The writing was done because of the urgings of one family member and was completed in 1995. No claim is made that the story is one of a kind or especially unique, no more than each of us is some different from the other. Reproduced here by permission of the author.

Because of the length of the manuscript, we will tell Roger's story in various installments, in succeeding issues of THE FLYING CIRCUS Quarterly, as page space permits.

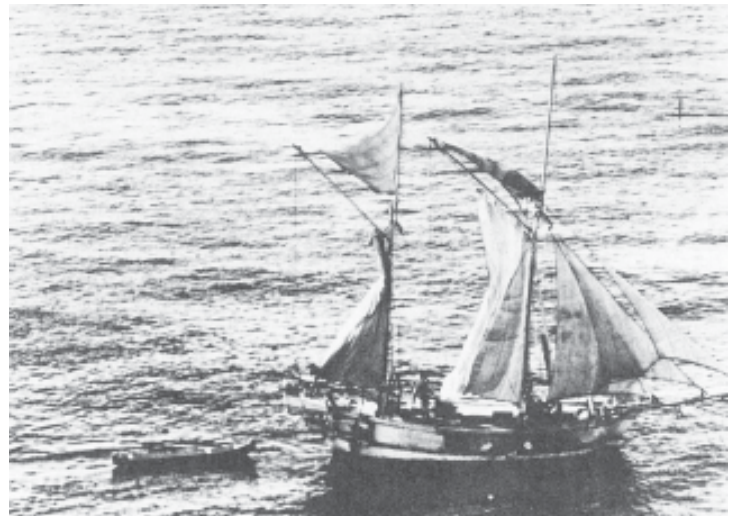
Roger Caputo was an NCO who was assigned to Group Headquarters, Administrative Section, in Intelligence.

The Japanese nearly took New Guinea, and would have, had it not been for the brave Aussie foot soldiers who fought them to a standstill along the crests of the Owen Stanley Mountains that form the so-called backbone of the Island. They bought time with their lives and the Japanese never attained the crests, the high ground, and were stopped on the Northern slopes (New Guinea, a long island, generally lay East-West). The Japanese movement into New Guinea was from other islands generally to the North and from the West out of the Dutch East Indies. It was the job of the 380th to pin down and disrupt the movement from the West and we were strategically located in the Northern Territory to whack them on their Southern flank; and whack them we did!

We pounded the Japanese in Western New Guinea (that was originally held by the Dutch); the Island of Ceram; the Aru and Kai Island Groups all in the Banda Sea; the Celebes; and Ambon Island. The Japanese had occupied so much territory so quickly they didn't have the shipping to service it. All these islands had a lot of inter-island commerce prior to the war by means of native-owned small sailing ships, often called luggers, with a small engine to negotiate the harbors. Unfortunately, these small sailing ships became targets as the intelligence was the Japanese were hiding behind the natives and we had to attack them because of the cargo which was in turn supporting the Japanese effort. On one raid to the Northern Celebes a huge shipyard was fire bombed where the Japanese had under construction as many as 50 of the luggers at one time. The raid made a great fire as the luggers were made of wood. The shipyard never resumed operation.

The Celebes was a target hit over and over again because of the nickel mines and the City of Makassar, the principal port. The enemy was sensitive about this and mounted a substantial defense with fighters any time we attacked. Our most dramatic losses occurred when we attacked the Celebes. One raid on Makassar produced an unexpected result: a Japanese cruiser was caught moored to the dock as the bomb run started and the bombardier had the Norden sight zeroed in on the docks, the assigned target. Suddenly, the bombardier noticed the cruiser and adjusted the sight accordingly and very neatly put a couple of bombs right on the deck. Some time later the intelligence was that particular cruiser had to return to Japan for major work

(continued on next page)



Lugger

DREAM TIME - A WAR STORY (continued)

in dry dock. Ships are very, very small targets and if they are moving, the evasive action they can take in the open sea almost guarantees a miss.

On the Island of Borneo, the largest, at the town of Balikpapan there was a harbor and most of all an oil refinery: the Shell Oil Co. The harbor could always be counted upon to contain numerous merchant vessels and perhaps an oil tanker or two. The round trip would be about 2,600 miles if the departure was from Darwin, 100 miles to the north of Fenton. The B-24s were designed for a maximum gross take-off weight of 56,000 pounds; for the mission to Borneo the gross would be 66,000 pounds! The fuel was 3,500 gallons in the wing and auxiliary bomb bay tanks leaving room for six 500-pound bombs. No formation flying was involved; 12 bombers were in single plane elements, spaced a few minutes apart. They took off at dusk; flew all night through multiple tropical fronts; struck the target with maximum damage; there was very little or no resistance as the raid was a total surprise and they all returned home, though one plane just made it to an Australian ocean beach with fuel exhausted and put it down easy. The airplane was repaired and flown off back to base to fight again. Those missions were 16 to 17 hours long and had no equal for distance!

Just getting there and back was no mean feat, not to mention the fact that on the first raid the shipping anchored in the harbor was skip bombed at masthead height and two were sunk as revealed by photos taken on subsequent missions. The oil refinery was set ablaze, with smoke towering in the air higher than the airplanes.

The mission to Soerabaya, Java, was the second largest mission; a round-trip of 2,100 miles. From Fenton or Darwin it would have been 2,300 miles. The purpose of the mission was more harassment than anything else; just a notice to the enemy that he was not safe anywhere. To carry out this mission, the aircrews and ground support people staged into a place called Marble Bar, a West Australian desert town. This all was done only once and anyone who had to stage out of Marble Bar agreed once was enough!

There was one mission more than any other that stayed fixed in my mind, because I actually felt that I contributed something, even though it was more by happenstance than for any other reason. A look at the Dutch East Indies will show that a chain of island, beginning with Sumatra as the first, and working eastward there is Java, then Bali, then Lombok, then Sumbawa, Sumba and the Flores, and finally Timor. This chain of islands is principally volcanic in origin. A very small one, Krakatoa [Indonesian: also known as Krakatau], was an active volcano cone and in August 1883 it literally exploded, killing 36,000 people by tidal waves, and dust was spewed into the atmosphere in such large quantities that the weather in the Northern hemisphere was so altered that there was no normal summer in 1884! The island disappeared!

The Japanese had removed some coastal defense guns from Singapore, after it was captured from the British, and relocated them on a cliff on Lombok Island overlooking the Lombok Strait between Lombok and Bali. The U.S. Navy submarines preferred to use the Strait when transiting from the Indian Ocean into the Java Sea. The currents in the Strait were very strong and the subs wanted to travel the Strait while on the surface. The presence of the coastal guns made the subs on the surface sitting ducks. The Navy sent the 380th a request to take out the guns and mission planning began. The Group Commander and our Section S-2 Officer were having an informal discussion concerning the best ordnance to drop on the target, altitude for the bombing run, and so forth. They were standing very close to me and I could not but help overhear the discussion. Everything I was hearing did not check with what I had seen on the target photos. The Japanese had dug in the guns and protected them with a log emplacement covered with soil. I knew it would take a big bomb to do much damage and these two officers were talking about 500-pound bombs and carpet patterns. I simply couldn't stand the misguided conclusions they were developing and I butted in: "Excuse me, Sirs, I couldn't help but overhear and I would like to offer that my studies of the photos indicate much larger bombs, dropped with precision from low altitudes, will be required to take those guns out." The two officers considered my recommendation for a moment and agreed my analysis was correct.

(continued on next page)

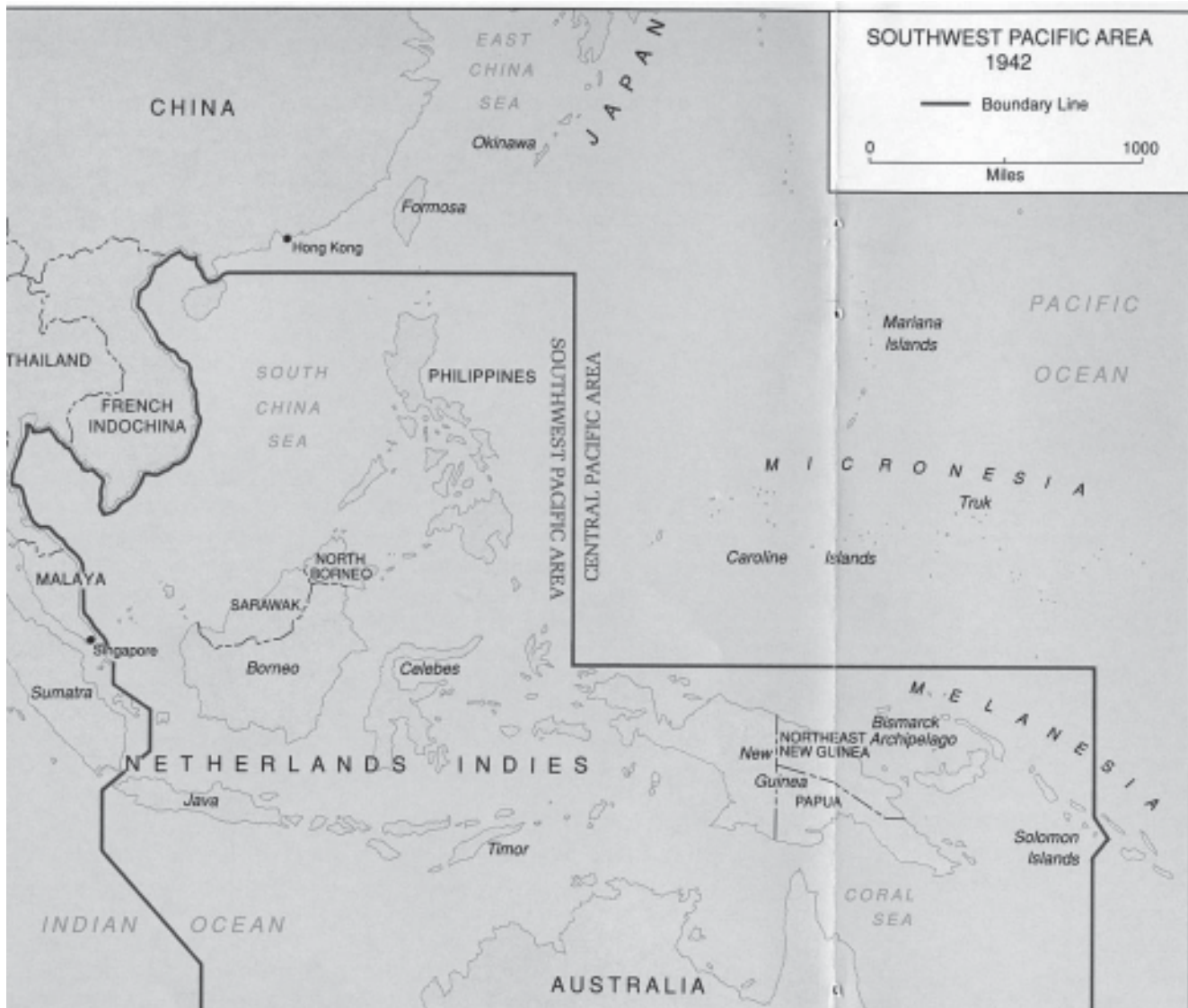
DREAM TIME - A WAR STORY (continued)

The bombers were loaded with 1,000-pound bombs and they were dropped from 10,000 feet. The target was totally obliterated! There was no evidence of any guns, logs, or anything else where the emplacements had been; only one mass of overlapping craters in the after strike photos. The Navy sent us a telegram of congratulations; they were overjoyed at the prospect of hazard-free transit of the Lombok Strait!

As I reflect back on this experience and look at all the factors that came together to create the success such as: bombardiers with expertise; two Officers willing to listen to the input of a brazen and confident T/Sgt who had been to a military photo school and whose knowledge was reinforced by the grand total of one year's training in college level engineering; the question has to be asked: "Does everything happen by accident?"

With the passing of this highpoint in my military career, I could have just as well gone home without altering the timing and conclusion of the war's end. However, I was "invited" to stay on, just in case some other unexpected crisis should arise and I might be needed!

More to come in future issues!



Map source: <http://www.1uptravel.com/worldmaps/history-ww2map29.html>

TAPS

*Day is done, gone the sun, from the lake, from the hill,
from the sky. All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.*

*Thanks and praise for our days 'neath the sun, 'neath
the stars, 'neath the sky. As we go, this we know
God is nigh.*



LEST WE FORGET

528th, Chamberlain, E. Curtis ("Curt"), Navigator, Moran's Crew (7), DOD April 15, 2009, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, reported by his daughter, Carol Chamberlain Vannerson.

528th, Isaack, Thomas ("Ike") S., Pilot, Stovell's Crew (3), DOD January 9, 2009, Morgantown, West Virginia, reported by his daughter, Terry Isaack Knight.

528th, Pauley, Ralph F., Assistant Flight Engineer, Gunner, Synar's Crew (18), DOD March 26, 2009, Portland, Oregon, reported by Loyd Oakes.

528th, Spencer, Eusebierus ("Seab") R., Acft Cmdr, Spencer's Crew (16), DOD January 19, 2009, Williamsburg, Michigan, reported by his widow, Peggy.

529th, Harrison, Harvey T., Jr., Aircraft Commander, Harrison's Crew (39), Operations Officer, Acting Commanding Officer, DOD May 15 2002, Nesconset, New York, reported by his daughter Lynn Harrison Cheney.

529th, Mayhew, Kenneth ("Kenny") L., Ground Staff, Ordnance Worker, DOD June 14, 2008, Toronto, Ohio, reported by his son, Kenneth T. Mayhew.

529th, Turner, Richard H., Navigator, Kershner's Crew (12), DOD December 22, 2008, Leawood, Kansas, reported by his widow, Louise.

530th, Kufus, William G., Pilot, McDaniel's Crew (56), Aircraft Commander, Kufus' Crew (NL) and Ground Staff, Transportation Officer, DOD October 6, 2008, Portland, Texas, reported by his granddaughter, Debbie Woods.

530th, Morris, James R., Ground Staff, Crew Chief, DOD December 5, 2008, Harvest, Alabama, reported by his son, Richard Morris.

530th, Morris, Wilbur L., Aircraft Commander, Morris' Crew (24) – POW 1943-1945, DOD February 26, 2009, Fortuna, California, reported by his nephew, Dick Dow.

531st, Megliola, Joseph R., Gunner, Goode's Crew (90), DOD March 9, 2009, Greensboro, North Carolina, reported by Joe Burdick.

531st, Oleynick, Nickolas, Pilot, Hicken's Crew (114), DOD March 16, 1998, China, California, reported by his daughter, Dody Oleynick Murphy.

531st, Schoenemann, Oswald ("Ozzie") M., Radio Operator, Blum's Crew (91), DOD February 15, 2009, Houston, Texas, reported by his daughter, Debra Schoenemann Campbell.

