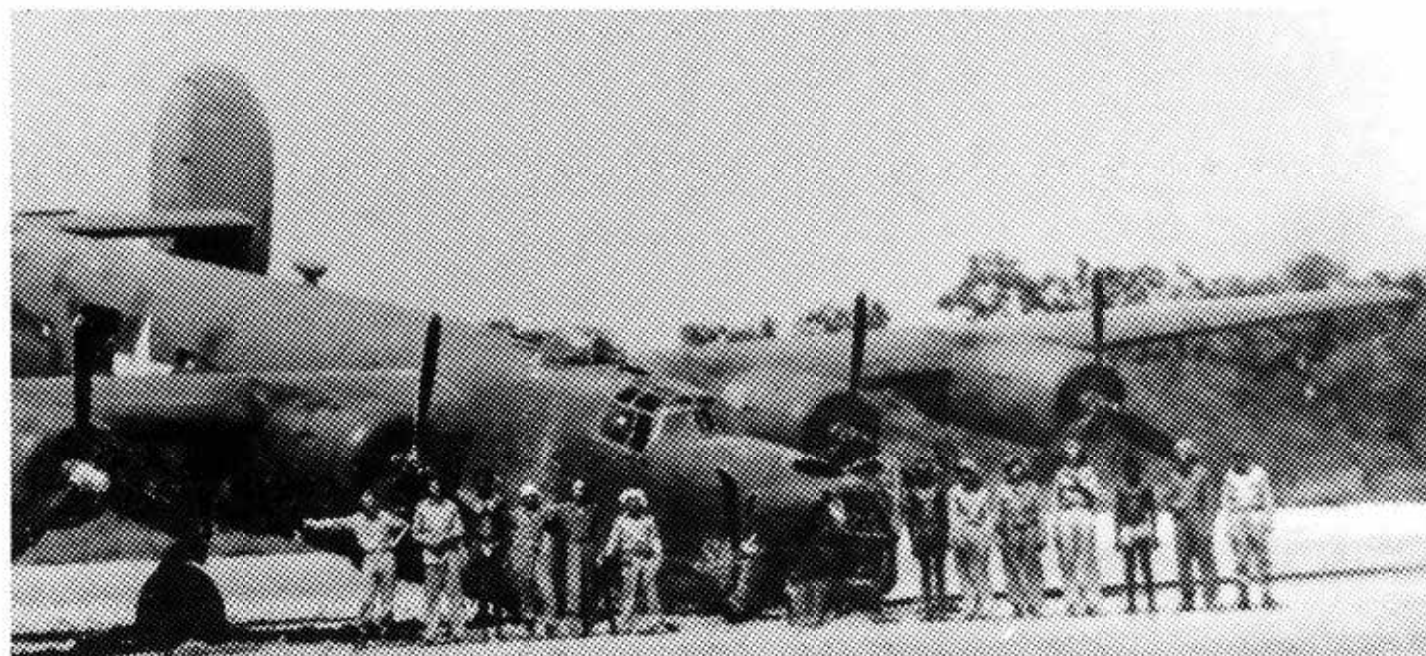


The Rescue of 'Shady Lady'

On 14th August 1943, the USAAF B-24D Liberator Bomber "Shady Lady" (42-40369) was on the return flight to Fenton airfield (near Darwin) from a bombing mission to Dutch East Indies. Low on fuel, Lieutenant Craig and 10 crew members crash landed on a salt pan on the remote western coast of Anjo Peninsula, 45km northwest of Kalumburu.

The flight was the longest bombing mission ever undertaken up to that date. Four weeks later on September 9th 1943, "Shady Lady" finally flew from its crash site to Fenton airfield just before the salt pan flooded.

Wunambal Gaambera and Balanggarra (Kwini, Goolari and Walmbii) Traditional Owners living on Anjo and in the Kalumburu area and (then Drysdale) Mission staff assisted in the rescue of "Shady Lady".



A hunting party of Gaambera and Kwini men were the first to arrive the next morning at the "Shady Lady" site. Over the 4 week period, at times up to 30 Traditional Owners played a significant role in the "Shady Lady" rescue operations – helping to guard the plane, crewing the Drysdale Mission lugger "Teresita Moa" in supply runs to Anjo, carrying supplies to the crash site and assisting USAAF and RAAF airmen and engineers to prepare "Shady Lady" for takeoff.

In the first days of September, a team of six Gaambera, Kwini and Walmbii men carried a replacement wood and canvas nose cone for the aircraft overland from Kalumburu to the crash site, an arduous 65 km two-day trek. This plaque was dedicated on the 14th August 2011 by Mrs Alice Craig and her daughter Ms Martha Craig to remember, acknowledge and to thank Wunambal Gaambera and Balanggarra Traditional Owner families today and Kalumburu Mission for the grateful assistance, gallant efforts and unwavering support of their forebears to both the "Shady Lady" and Allied salvage crews and for their contribution to the success of the rescue operation 68 years ago.

This plaque was created by the 380th Bombardment Group Association and Fact Not Fiction Films

