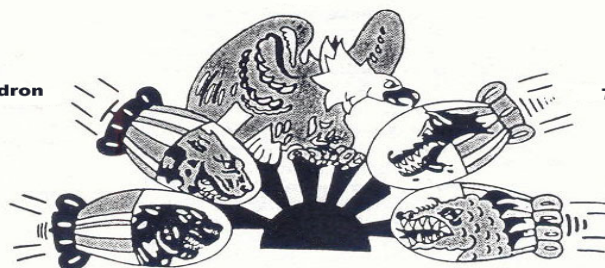


823 rd Squadron

71st Squadron

822 nd Squadron

405th Squadron



"The Sun Setters"

THE 38TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION (WW II)

SEPTEMBER, 2008



FROM OUR PRESIDENT — —

OUR 2008 REUNION is planned and ready to launch on 1 - 5 October in Dayton, Ohio. Chick Alford and Bob Lamb have organized a super reunion you do not want to miss. Here is a quick overview. **Wednesday** - we will register and have our welcome dinner. **Thursday** - we will travel down the Aviation Trail; plus, tour the Wright Brothers National Memorials and Bicycle Shop. **Friday** - we will visit the "United States Air Force Museum". **Saturday morning** - we will have our group meeting and **Saturday Evening** - our farewell dinner. More details on the reunion schedule may be found in the "38 BG 2008 Reunion Event Section" insert with the newsletter.

38 BG ASSOCIATION MEETING has some very important agenda items. Our Association By-Laws require that we elect an Association President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer and five Directors for the next two years. Please email me if you would volunteer for any of these positions. Also, please email me the name(s) of a member(s), who you would recommend for any of the positions. jackdet@hawaii.rr.com

FAREWELL BANQUIT entertainment will be provided by "The SWINGING CANARIES", who will play and sing music from the "30s & 40s". Do not miss it.

PROJECT LEGACY 38th BG is continuing to perpetuate the history of the 38th BG's contribution to winning WW II. Our Webmaster, Tom Behrens with the help of Orland Gage has developed one of the best unit web sites on the net and they continue to improve it. Previous 38 BG News letters are now linked to the web and plans are on the way to link DVD interviews to our website. If anyone has a video tape or DVD/ CD of a WW II story related to the 38th BG, please send a copy to Tom Behrens at 11206 Mist Moor Ct., Riverview, FL. 33569. Check out the web site: www.sunsetters38thbg.com.

Our Secretary/Treasurer Orland Gage continues to keep our finances solid by investing our money. He does many other important support functions for the Association; such as, maintaining rosters, collecting the dues and, posting the newsletters. Thank you Orland.

OUR BOOK: The latest word I have just received from Larry Hickey is, "If all goes well, we'll have it out and shipped by the end of the year, possibly quite a bit earlier."

In closing, let us all 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.

See you in Dayton, Ohio. 1 - 5 October 2008.

Jack DeTour

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Future newsletters will need to have your news. Nothing big, just something to share. Kids - how many? What do they do? Grandkids - how many? What do they do?

Great Grandkids - - - .
Where have you been?
Who have you seen?

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".

John H. Hutson
Philip E. Kelsall
John W. Wolf

405th
405th
405th

Wallace H. Byron
James W. Fallow
Harry Zarfes
Walter J. Deas

822nd
822nd
823rd
HON

TOTAL TO DATE	
Headquarters	18
69 th Squadron	2
70 th Squadron	59
71 st Squadron	156
89 th Squadron	1
405 th Squadron	174
822 nd Squadron	96
823 rd Squadron	97
Unit unknown	2
Honorary	1

YOUR 2007-8

ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

President Jack DeTour
 98-1108 Malualua St., Aiea, HI, 96701
 808-487-2842 jackdet@hawaii.rr.com

Vice-President Chick Alford
 10 La Grange Cir., Hot Springs, AR, 71909
 501-922-4779 helengene@hsnp.com

Secretary/Treasurer Orland Gage
 337 W. Reservoir Dr., Lewiston, ID, 83501
 208 746-0875 ogage@clearwire.net

Hdq. Rep. Burt Erickson
 P. O. Box 687 Page, AZ, 86040
 928-645-5394

Hdq. Alt. Rep. Warren E. Lee
 6600 Peppermill Dr., Las Vegas, NV, 89146
 702-221-0699 m-w-lee@earthlink.net

71st Sqdn. Rep. Curtis R. Hunt
 21557 Coffee Hollow Rd., Tahlequah, OK, 74464
 918-458-0575 chunt615@dishmail.net

71st Sqdn. Alt. Paul Johnson
 1054 New McNeil Ave., Lawrence, NY, 11559
 516-371-3490

405th Sqdn. Rep. Harry E. Terrell, Jr.
 20475 Upper Bay Dr., Newport Beach, CA, 92660
 949-852-8015 heterrell@sbcglobal.net

405th Sqdn. Alt. David Gunn
 19754 Santee Ln., Valley Center, CA, 92082
 760-749-3769 pappygnk@juno.com

822nd Sqdn. Rep. John Grady
 2707 George Ct., Rolling Meadows, IL, 60008
 847-255-1223 jgrady%prodigy.net

822nd Sqdn. Alt. Grant W. Nelson
 P.O. Box 696, Ferndale, WA, 98248
 206-384-1788

823rd Sqdn. Rep. Charles T. Conner
 4917 Ravenswood Dr., Apt 1010
 San Antonio, TX, 78227

823rd Sqdn. Alt. Bob Lamb
 1277 Chipmunk Crt., Centerville, OH, 45458
 937-432-9116 b-j.lamb@donet.com

Editor, "The Sun Setters" David Gunn
 19754 Santee Ln., Valley Center, CA, 92082
 760-749-3769 pappygnk@juno.com

Editorial Advisor Orland Gage
 337 W. Reservoir Dr., Lewiston, ID, 83501
 208 746-0875 ogage@clearwire.net

Assoc. Editor Jim Thoren
 1628 202nd pl SW Lynnwood, WA 98036-7025
 425-609-8180 mustang9@comcast.net

Association Web Site:
www.sunsetters38bg.com

Web master Tom Behrens
 11206 Mist Moor Court Riverview, FL 33569
 (813) 671-9089 tom@TomBehrensUSA.com

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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.

From the Editor - David Gunn

In August, Jack, Orland, and I were shocked to hear that Walt Deas had passed away suddenly due to a heart attack. When Walt learned of the discovery of the wreckage in deep water of Captain Herry's plane at Madang, New Guinea, about 20 years ago he determined to explore the wreck and to do a documentary covering the original crash and accompanying capture and severe abuse of the crew. The wreck had become a living coral reef.

He became a Friend of the 38th and gathered information from our members. He and his wife, Jean, photographed and gathered film footage of the area and its people. They put together the film **The Bomber Reef**, and released a DVD with the story. We were privileged to view the story at our Mesa reunion in 2006. Several of you have purchased the DVD.

The DVD version was awarded high recognition at a film showing in Chicago shortly after our reunion. He and Jean are well regarded for their marine documentaries.

Jack has conveyed to Jean our condolences.

I had the privilege of a rather steady e-mail exchange of information with Walt for the last four years. A few months ago I was able to obtain from Amazon some equipment he wanted.

Jack always makes flattering comments about me in his message for each newsletter. Since he usually writes more than we have space for on page 1, I usually delete that paragraph. Since this issue completes our coverage of the history of the 38th BG, I do want to enlarge on his comments submitted for this issue.

Our work was greatly enhanced when Al Kennedy put together the disks of text data and photographs he had obtained from Larry Hickey in 2004. Before the set was finalized, he provided us with preliminary copies which made a great difference in what we have been able to do. The final disks made additional pictures available to us.

Orland has done considerable work in finding and forwarding information to me to incorporate in these issues. Jack was able to get several additional disks from Maxwell Field containing information we did not have. Orland worked over those disks and made them searchable and provided me with a set. He deserves honorable mention for this work in addition to his work as our Secretary/Treasurer.

Jim Thoran, a former editor of the newsletter, has been able in recent years to go through Al Kennedy's disks on special assignment from me and assemble information for me to incorporate in several issues.

Orland made arrangements for the printing and mailing of the newsletters in Lewiston. He has taken the CD copy of each issue, reviewed it and worked with his local people to get the letter distributed. That has often included getting corrections incorporated prior to printing. He has patiently waited for me to get the CD to him, always behind schedule.

Without all this support, I could not have completed this work. So I must express my personal appreciation for their considerable assistance.

My own research has progressed often far afield down many a "bunny trail" which has been rewarding to me. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to do all this exploration.

It is with regret that I tell you I will not be able to attend the reunion in Dayton. I would have enjoyed it. Have a great time!

I recently check the Wikipedia site for the **SR-71 Blackbird**. I found it utterly fascinating. Shortly after this search, someone sent me an e-mail with an account by an ex **SR-71** pilot of some of his experiences. It is hard to believe how this plane was made, how it hangs together, and how it flies. You **MUST** check it out. They have one on display at Dayton.

"The Sun Setters" is printed and mailed by **Lewiston Printing**, Lewiston, Idaho. Mrs. Don Snyder and Kathy Morgan go out of their way to help. They fix the Editor's goofs. We couldn't get the job done without

THE WORLD AT WAR, Suspension of Hostilities

Hindsight confirms that hostilities were only suspended with the surrender of Germany and Japan. Russia, who had been an ally of Hitler's Germany in the early days of the war and later the victim of Hitler's treachery, had been able to monitor the development of the Atomic Bomb by America.

A major agent enabling Russia's subterfuge was Klaus Fuchs. With information passed to them through Fuchs and others, the Russians were quickly able to duplicate the American development at a fraction of the costs and in less time. Their product was an extremely close duplication of America's Fat Man, the second bomb to be dropped on Japan.

Within five years, they fostered the already rising to power of Communist China, and the assault on South Korea by the puppet North Korean "Peoples Republic." In less than 25 years they energized two significant conflicts involving the Vietnam "civil war". And the American populace lived in fear, digging atom bomb shelters, intercontinental missile silos, and launching long range missile submarines to counter their blustering threats.

POST WAR GERMANY

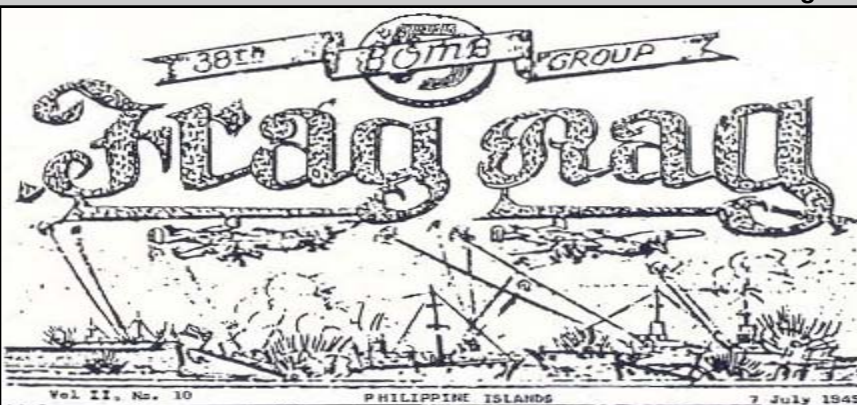
In the months following the end of hostilities, millions of ethnic Germans were expelled from eastern European countries and German territories transferred to other nations. This led to great hardship for the expelled and the German regions they adopted for their new homes. They were not welcome because there was already a shortage of dwellings and commonly needed supplies. A housing shortage persisted until the early 1960s.

The expulsions had been authorized by the Allies at Potsdam. However, the strain on the exhausted refugees and regions they were passing through led to Allied pleas to suspend the expulsions.

The key agenda item for the new Allied control council; was to de-nazify Germany. A new "Provisional Civil Ensign" was adopted as a flag and used on German ships to comply with maritime law. The display or other use of the swastika and other symbols of the Nazi order were prohibited.

In the Fall, Allies negotiated on provisions and procedures for "War Crime Trials." The trials were to be held in Nuremberg. The trial of 24 of the most important German leaders began in November of 1945 and continued until October of 1946. Russia,

(Continued page 4, *Suspension of Hostilities*)



NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - -

In mid August, 53 of the **Sun Setter** planes were sent to Morotai to provide maximum facility space on Okinawa for the movement of occupation troops on their way to Japan. Only a handful of planes were left for necessary communication and transportation. Activity in the **38th Bomb Group** was shifted to processing the paper work for the departure of men in the organization who had served the longest. The Group Personnel Office processed records for over 500 officers and enlisted men in preparation for their return to the States.

Under an additional heavy work load in September, Group personnel staff set about the task of categorizing the remaining men by their accumulated points so that records would be quickly assembled when point levels for eligibility for return were reduced to new levels. Records were carefully kept updated to keep the lists current.

The caliber of replacements being received was some assurance that the Group would be able to maintain high standards of operation. The Chemical Warfare section took steps to assure that procedures for "going out of business" was orderly and safe. Gas masks were collected and equipment and supplies were inventoried and stored.



Yontan strip at Okinawa, Home for the 38th, August to November 1945

Col. Torgerson, who had assumed command of the **38th** when Col. Hawes was killed at Beppu Bay, returned to the States. Lt. Col. Bruce Marston became the new C. O. The return of so many men meant that

(Continued page 4, *No More Bombing Missions*)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - (From page 3)

there were a large number of adjustments and transfers of responsibilities during the month. On 22 September Brig. Gen. Crab presented awards in a ceremony to 18 officers and five enlisted men. They were scheduled to leave the theater in a few days.

Jim Thoren relates that,

"I was sent from Okinawa back to Lingayen along with a Major and two Sergeants to clean up the old area we lived in shortly before the first big typhoon hit Okinawa. Just after we arrived there, a truck showed up with a load of beer for the 38th. We signed for it and for about a week we drank all we could.

"At the same time we cleaned the area, but we also sawed through most of the supporting bamboo beams in all the huts we could because we were never compensated for the investment we had in them when they were turned over to some other outfit. The first big wind after we left knocked most of the huts flat. The MPs were sent after us and the Major (who was bombed blind), loaded us back on the B-25 with what beer we could haul and sent us back to Okinawa.

"We never heard much about it after that, especially since we brought the beer with us. It was terrible stuff – you could hardly drink it.

"My tent had blown away in the typhoon so I had a new tent when the second (the really big blow) hit (in October) about a week after we got back."

Many typhoon warnings had been received during September. On the 16th, one hit, starting in the afternoon. The wind velocity reached its peak about 2300. Heavy rain pelted the area driven by the winds almost horizontally. About 85% of the living quarters were demolished as well as about half of the operational offices structures. Because of the sturdier construction of the Mess Halls, they survived with less damage. They became the best shelter for men driven from their tents.

Near the Group tent cities the **Navy Seabees (CBs)** had been blasting coral from a ridge for road and runway construction. On 21 September, a blast sent a large chunk aloft which came down through one of the tents, striking Cpl. Harry Coffman on the head. Unfortunately, he died *en route* to the hospital. Blasting at the ridge ceased.

Harry Terrell fulfilled a commitment made in 1944, remembering,

"When I first arrived in the 405th Squadron, I got to know a fine lad, Johnny Johnson, who lived across the road from our tent at 17-mile, Port Moresby. He was killed on a night take-off at Dobodura (Feb. 29, 1944) when the B-25 bellied in after the gear was raised. I kept his Aussie flying boots and swore that I would walk the streets of Tokyo in them for Johnny.

"At the end of the war, I managed a courier flight from Yontan to Seoul and Tokyo. I had heard Admiral Halsey was going to ride the Emperor's white horse, so I thought I'd do him one better and buzz the Emperor's Palace – and I did on September 22, 1945. We RON'd (Remain Over Night) at Kimpo and the next day headed for Tokyo.

"When I landed at Tachikawa, I was asked to show the route of flight I had taken from Korea. General MacArthur was living in the New Grand Hotel in Yokohama and had received the report of the 'buzz job'. I showed an approach from the southwest, away from the Ginza outside the Emperor's Palace grounds. I never heard another word about my flight plan.

"Incidentally, Halsey never did ride the Emperor's horse!"

(Continued page 5, No More Bombing Missions)

Suspension of Hostilities (From page 3)

France, Great Britain, and the U. S. each appoint one judge and one alternate. Of the 24, 12 were sentenced to death, eight to prison terms of eight years to life: one committed suicide before trial, one was declared mentally unfit for trial, two were acquitted.

In October 1946, 23 doctors and medical associates were put on trial for crimes against humanity. This trial lasted until August of 1947. Six were sentenced to death, 10 received prison terms, seven were acquitted. This was the first of 12 trials held by U. S. Military courts at Nuremberg.

The third of the trials held by U. S. Military courts was for 16 German Jurists and lawyers indicted for actions related to the German eugenic and racial purity laws. Four were acquitted, four received life sentences, and the remaining received prison sentences of varying lengths.

In all the trials, 185 persons had been indicted, 142 of whom were found guilty of at least one charge against them. These received various sentences: imprisonment or death.

Germany's industry was to be broken down, eliminating any ship building or aircraft manufacturing. Civilian industries that might contribute to military manufacturing were limited. Steel manufacturing was reduced to 25 percent of the prewar level. In general, industrial capacity was to be reduced to 50 percent of Germany's 1938 capacity. Over 15,000 industrial plants were listed for destruction.

Germany was to be reduced to a standard of living equivalent to what it had been at the height of the 1932 depression. Auto production was limited to 10 percent of the prewar level. Large quantities of food and raw material imports would be required.

The western Allied powers brought massive amounts of food and other assistance to the continent but there were strict controls and the aid was designated for non-German refugees and displaced populations. The former enemy populace lived on meager rations which in many cases amounted to very little more than 1000 calories a day.

The Truman administration soon realized that European economic recovery could not move forward without the rebuilding of the German industrial capability. At the same time, it was felt that France had just reasons to fear German resurgence, having been invaded three times in 70 years. The Saar basin, a significant German industrial area, was placed under French administration in 1947. A decade later and following a referendum, the area was returned to Germany.

The western powers perceived that the

(Continued page 5, Suspension of Hostilities)

Suspension of Hostilities (From page 4)

continued hunger and poverty in western Germany could drive the populace toward communism. In 1948, they arranged a monetary reform to cope with inflation. The U. S. extended the Marshal Plan to also bring assistance to Germany in its recovery. This was viewed as being of primary importance in rebuilding the spirit and strength of the recovery of western Europe.

Russia had not agreed with the financial reform plans and withdrew from the joint administration agreements. They initiated the blockade of Berlin and commenced the building of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain sharply separating east and west Germany. The western Allies countered with the Berlin Air Lift which provided West Berlin with the necessities of life through the winter of 1947-48.

After eleven months, the Russians yielded, lifting the blockade. The massive airlift had been a large success in spite of Russian harassment and extremely bad weather. The harsh divisive regimentation administered by the Russians continued for more than four decades. Thousands lost their lives in an effort to go to the west. About 2,000,000 succeeded by diverse and devious means in making the journey.

ITALY

Italy, the former ally of German, had begun its journey to a new state after surrender to the Allies several months before the German surrender. In June of 1946 a popular election abolished the monarchy. A new constitution was adopted a year later for the new republic.

The Christian Democratic Party leaders stressed cooperation with the U. S. and the Vatican. They stressed the need for industrial growth and agricultural reform. The new Italy soon saw a marked rise in the standard of living. Because of the popular support given by the Italian people in the final months of the war, they were not on the receiving end of harsh retribution as was dealt to Germany.

Italy joined the NATO Alliance in 1949. Italy was stripped of its African colonies as a result of the war.

FRANCE

At the time of the D-Day landings in June of 1944, The French Committee of National Liberation asserted that it was the provisional government of France. With the liberation of Paris in August, General Charles de Gaulle led the party as it gained control of the new French Republic in a

(Continued page 6, **Suspension of Hostilities**)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - (From page 4)

During the 43 days their planes were at Morotai, three planes were lost. An **822nd** plane was damaged while taxiing when a steel drum was blown into a propeller which ripped the drum apart, flinging scraps into several places of the plane. A **71st Squadron** plane on a practice mission to Halmahera Island experienced an engine failure which resulted in injuries to both pilots. Fortunately, their serious injuries healed quickly.

In late September, the B-25s at Morotai returned to the Group on Okinawa waiting for the move to Japan.

It had been slightly more than three and a half years since the **USS Bliss** had sailed from San Francisco Bay to Brisbane and Melbourne, Australia, with the ground echelon of the **38th Bomb Group**. Because the Air echelons of the **69th** and **70th Squadrons** had been kept in Fiji and New Caledonia in June of 1942, their ground echelons had been moved from Australia to New Caledonia and Fiji to join them. The boys still left in Australia had waited about six months to be joined by the air echelon of the **71st** and **405th Squadrons** in their B-25s. A year later, the **822nd** and **823rd Squadrons** joined them in New Guinea.

In 1945, with the cessation of hostilities and orders being issued for many going home, there was cause to think back over the 36 months of combat, remembering the difficulties, the dark days when comrades had been lost, the exhilaration of victories. The data for the **405th Squadron** that has been compiled (see page 13) would reflect the records of the other squadrons, remembering that the 822nd and 823rd had been in combat for about 24 months.

OCTOBER - ANOTHER TYPHOON!!

The month of October arrived while speculation of when their next move, a move to the Japanese homeland islands, would take place. There was packing, unpacking and repacking of personal items, supplies, and equipment. On 1 October, orders were received to transfer out of the Group all planes with 600 or more hours. Only nine planes would be left.

There was an advance warning of a new typhoon that would soon hit the area. Some of the men staked their tents more securely after experiencing the typhoon in September. The storm hit on 9 October at 1400 with vicious fury and by late afternoon the wind velocity reached 130 MPH. The mess halls disintegrated at 1530. Corrugated metal sheets flew through the air more like tissue paper. By 1600 everything was in shambles. It was evident that the September storm had been a mild gale by comparison.

At 1800 a particularly fierce blast took a final punch at whatever was left standing. Gusts had been clocked at 180 mph. Flying debris threatened injury to any who just might venture out in the maelstrom. Men who ventured out wore their helmets.

The only standing structure was the Group Officers Club which had been built on a very sturdy foundation. Even here, the high winds drove rain through the ventilators and into the building. The place became a sanctuary for men of all ranks. Cooks managed to serve up hot coffee and K rations to those who had somehow reached the safety of the Officers Club.

Merle Meacham, a navigator waiting for his ticket home, recalled that, "Some of us sought shelter near a large boulder and watched Quonset huts literally explode and blow away." As night came on, they found shelter with men which had erected doubled pyramidal tents (one on top of the other) pegged closely all around to prevent the wind from getting under the canvas. The shelter was tightly packed for the night; "some of

(Continued page 6, **No More Bombing Missions**)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - -

(From page 5)

**The 38th Area Before THE TYPHOON!!**

us even got some sleep."

The force of the wind bent the Headquarter's flag pole to a 90 degree angle. "Awesome!" said Meacham.

Crew Chiefs and crew members loaded sand bags onto the wings of the few planes of the Group. They kept the engines running to enable them to keep the planes headed into the wind. Flying debris did some damage to the fabric covered control surfaces which was quickly repaired after the storm. Water damage was also soon remedied.

Meecham recalled that the work of the men who remained active on the line prevented the loss of even a single plane. Elsewhere around the strip planes were smashed and torn asunder.

The wind began to abate about 2000 but the rain continued to pour across the desolation. Men had managed to survive under flattened tents, in trucks and ambulances, and some had even taken refuge in the tomb caves. The rain finally stopped at 0900 on the 10th. The cooks managed to serve up breakfast at their emergency mess in the Group Officers Club.

**After THE TYPHOON - "Where are my _____?"**

Amazingly, there were only minor injuries. One officer was hit by a cot flying through the air and a Crew Chief was hit by a board causing injuries for which he was hospitalized for a short time. One man was

(Continued page 7, **No More Bombing Missions**)**Suspension of Hostilities** (From page 5)

coalition of three parties.

The first constitutional bill was rejected in a referendum in May of 1946 and a new constituent assembly was elected in June. The new constitution was adopted in October and the Fourth Republic led the reconstruction of battered France. Women were given the right to vote, Social Security and Family Benefits were adopted, and the reconstruction of the cities and transportation and economic infrastructure were pursued.

"The West German government had to pay reparations as compensation for invading and occupying France and to any civilians killed, starved, sent into forced labor, or left homeless by the war." Nearly a million German POWs were part of the work force for the reconstruction.

With three principle political parties nearly equally supported by the people, it was difficult to form an effective government. For more than a decade there seemed to be a new French government more than once a year. During this time, the colonial empire of France began to disintegrate with the loss of control of French Indo China and the African departments and colonies.

In 1958, a new constitution was adopted and the Fifth Republic was born with Charles de Gaulle at the helm. In subsequent decades, the nation followed a path of increased liberalism and frequent political instability.

GREECE

With the German invasion of Greece in the early 40s, resistance movements sprang up in various areas of Greece. There was no unity of these groups. Some were heavily influenced by communist ideologs, others were more strongly democratic in principle and many were loyal to the monarchy. The King had fled to Egypt and set up a Greek Government in Exile. The various resistance groups fought each other as often as they fought the Germans. The Germans soon only controlled some of the major towns and highways. This state of affairs continued throughout the remainder of the war.

After the German surrender these groups each continued their struggle to be the dominating power. Stalin did not openly take sides in the struggle so as not to disturb the tenuous relationship between the Allied countries. Greece had been acknowledged as being in the British sphere of influence.

The British sent various representatives to the area to try to bring stability. In elections in 1946, the United Patriotic Party, a

(Continued page 7, **Suspension of Hostilities**)

Suspension of Hostilities (From page 6)

coalition of monarchist groups won. In September, a referendum decided that the monarchy would be retained and the king returned to Athens.

Greece became a sort of British protectorate. But there was no stability in the months that followed which saw six Prime Ministers come and go in short order.

Fighting broke out between groups of communist sympathizers and more democratically oriented groups. Civil war would continue through 1948 with villagers in the mountain areas suffering at the hands of both partisan and government forces.

The British, rebuilding their own homeland and economy, could not afford to continue their efforts to support the legitimate government. In 1947, President Truman declared that the U. S. would step in to support the government. The Greek Army had grown to about 90,000 and was being trained into a professional army supported by the western Allies. The U. S. Ambassador was the focus of considerable influence by the U. S. on the Greek government for several years.

In late 1947, the resistance groups formed a Provisional Democratic Government and moved from guerilla tactics to conventional war attacks. With material and leadership assistance, the government forces pressed the resistance group back into the mountains of northern Greece. Finally, in late 1949, after Tito had closed the borders of Yugoslavia to the rebels and with no assistance coming from Russia, a cease fire was declared in October which became permanent.

But Greece was in ruins, being even worse off than at the end of World War II in 1945. The people were divided in several ways and great numbers migrated to other countries because of the bitterness between neighbors and villagers. Great instability was the general order for several years.

It wasn't until the collapse of a military coup in 1974 that a conservative government was established and a new constitution was adopted. The monarchy was abolished, free elections were guaranteed with individual rights and political freedom.

Eventually there were movements of reconciliation which brought the former dissenting groups together and began a national healing. But post war Greece had suffered greatly, more than most other pre-war nations.

GREAT BRITAIN

The British celebrated the surrender of

(Continued page 8, *Suspension of Hostilities*)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - (From page 6)

missing for two days and turned up in the hospital. But the Group had survived what Newsweek told the folks at home was "the Pacific's worst typhoon in twenty years."

For a week the area resembled a "Hobo Jungle" rather than a military camp. Clothes were hung out to dry for two or three days. Many of the personal items, as well as Air Force equipment, disappeared as large numbers of both native and military "looky lous" wandered over the countryside. It had been impossible to guard anything during the storm.

While the Engineering Section had preserved the planes by valiant effort, its Technical Order File had been destroyed and another was procured from the **308th Airdrome Squadron**. The Statistical Control Section tent had gone bye-bye. Somehow its files had survived intact. Not so fortunate was Group Operations which, like others, had lost its tents. Its files and equipment were salvaged with considerable effort.

The Communications Section had suffered considerable serious damage. By dint of great effort, they managed to restore telephone and electric power service within a few days.

Because of the imminent move to Japan, only essential rebuilding was done. This did not include rebuilding the mess halls.

The Personnel Section worked long into the night assuring that the records of incoming men and the vitally important records for men being redeployed Stateside were in proper order. In all, over 1,000 men were processed during the month. The Group gained 25 Officers and 183 Enlisted Men during October. Among the new Enlisted Men there were few with specialty ratings meaning the outfit was short of necessary ground specialists. Special training sessions were implemented.

The Special Service unit managed to make distribution of papers and magazines. A better movie projection booth was built as well as the screen. New projectors and athletic equipment were obtained from departing organizations.

NOVEMBER, JAPAN AND "K RATIONS" FOR THANKSGIVING

The Group received word of the location of its occupation site. A contingent of 175 officers and enlisted men was sent to make preparations for the arrival of the Group at Fukuoka on Kyushu Island under the command of Chief Executive Officer, Major Joseph Gentile.

Major Gentile had been a Construction Engineer before the war. He brought the best of his experience to the task and met the challenge. He was not the only man to bring such valuable experience at this critical point. Orland Gage was a member of the advance group that had been sent to Fukuoka in October. He remembers that,

"I had gone down to the docks at Sasebo and found two units of #3 & Btr IWP that had been manufactured in Lewiston, Idaho, by the company that I worked for before being drafted. I had a case of beer and we traded so to speak. We hauled it to the site of the latrine in a 1935 Ford truck that burned charcoal.

"The factory had a sawmill and about eight million board feet of mahogany squares that the Japanese had brought back from Indo-China in ships that carried supplies to their troops. The **5th Fighter Command** had taken over the sawmill and put one of their Officers in charge. He knew nothing about sawmilling and was getting very little production. I suggested to Lt. Col. Marston that I could do a better job since this was what I did in civilian life.

"We took over the operation and changed things. The head rig was pulled by two Japanese laborers and the head rig was a band mill with a 4-inch band. I found a larger motor for the edger and converted it to a gang rip cutting five 2 x 4s at a time and we soon had all of the 2 x 4s that we needed.

"There were several quite large mahogany squares that I had

(Continued page 8, *No More Bombing Missions*)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - (From page 7)

sawed into 2-inch slabs and these were given to the Japanese carpenters to build the bars in the Officers and Enlisted Men's Clubs."

Plans were made for loading five LSTs to be assigned to move the Group. Advance and Rear Echelons were designated. The logistics of loading the LSTs were prepared and checked.

At the end of the month, everyone was hoping for better quarters and better food at their new location. Unfortunately, there was no supply of winter clothing to issue to those men whose blood had grown thinner during their tropical assignments. Heat would be needed for the winter months that were upon them.

The word from the detachment at Fukuoka was not very encouraging. The men on Okinawa had been enduring greater hardships than ever before and wondered how long their ordeal would last. They did learn that their new home would be in a former Japanese aircraft factory. The permanent shelters offered some hope as colder months approached.

The Engineering Section was constantly on the search for any equipment being left by departing units that would add to their capability and ease their task. As the days of November started ticking off, they were able to take over some heavy equipment, particularly cranes, being left by a **CB** group headed for the States.

When the five LSTs arrived, voyage and reserve rations were drawn. The Motor Pool drew extra gasoline and oil stocks. Much of what had been scrounged was too heavy to be loaded manually. But loading began when the first LST dug its nose into the beach on 7 November. The skipper of the loaded **822nd** LST was unable to pull away from the beach. All the vehicles were unloaded during the night of the eighth. The ship pulled away from the beach and then grounded at a new location. After reloading the vehicles, the ship pulled away at high tide on the night of the ninth.

The LSTs moved around the island to Buckner Bay as loading was completed. The **71st** loaded on the ninth. All their tents were down and loaded but several snags held up the completion of loading and the men would have to sleep under the stars. Unfortunately, the stars were replaced by clouds that started dropping water for two nights. The men managed to find shelter in tents of other squadrons not yet loaded. All loading was finally completed on the 11th and the LSTs were ready to join a convoy being formed at Buckner Bay.

As darkness replaced the daylight on 13 November, the convoy set sail. The trip was uneventful as the sea was unusually smooth for the season of the year. The men particularly enjoyed the good food. The hot showers and flush toilets aboard ship made life quite pleasant.

Fukuoka Harbor, on northern Kyushu, was still sprinkled with mines so the convoy sailed on to Sasebo. Unloading was delayed for two days and many of the men took advantage of the time to venture ashore to see Japan. The town had been heavily damaged by bombings. It was dirty and crowded. Those seeking souvenirs found them few and costly.

Unloading was completed on 22 November. The 40-mile trip to Fukuoka was a dispiriting series of flat tires and the usual breakdowns. The men arrived tired and depressed. Their Thanksgiving meal was K rations. This was not the grand parade of a victorious army after three and a half years of struggle and hardships, mosquitoes, jungle rot, and mourning the loss of planes and comrades in the tropical hinterlands. It was a sobering reminder that, "Those who gave the most to achieve victory do not share in its fruits."

(Continued page 9, No More Bombing Missions)

Suspension of Hostilities (From page 7)

Germany by dissolving the war time coalition government under Churchill and electing a Labor Party government in July of 1945 under Clement Atlee. Atlee was sent to Potsdam to take Churchill's place in the negotiations between the Allied Governments relative to each ones roll in the post war period.

While the British Isles had not been invaded and occupied by the enemy, there was considerable bomb damage. England and Scotland were crowded with Yank flyers, Army units, and Navy personnel. As the war ended, over a half million German POWs were also confined to several camps in the Isles. They were a labor pool for reparations for damage done by the German Luftwaffe.

The British citizens entered a period of highly controlled availability of food and goods that was to last in varying degrees for a decade. Wages and profits were stringently controlled.

But the returning servicemen were absorbed into the job market. Repair and reconstruction progressed under controlled conditions as efforts were made to expand exports and limit imports. Large loans from the U. S. and Canada helped to finance the recovery.

By 1950 Britain's part of world trade was 50 percent greater than in the years preceding the war.

The citizenry worked to achieve a more normal life style, quickly putting aside bitter memories of the conflict. At Christmas of 1946, thousands of German POWs were guest in British homes around the dinner table sharing rationed goodies.

British colonies around the world were restless in their desire for independence. In India independence movements had been strong before the war and made governing during the war somewhat difficult. India gained independence in 1947. Other British colonies in Asia were soon given independence, some leaving the Commonwealth.

The West African and West Indies colonial holdings also gained independence. Britain gave up its Colonial world power status but retained its roll as a world power with its air force and naval forces.

The Labor government soon set about nationalizing significant portions of the industries, services and financial institutions. Some of this was reversed when the Con-

(Continued page 9, Suspension of Hostilities)

Suspension of Hostilities (From page 8)

servative Party came to power in the early 1950s.

Under the Labor Party's rule, the British became a welfare state. A wide range of benefits was legislated including a national health plan. Much of this was based on promises to the Labor Party early in the war in exchange for enduring austerity and deprivation in the Battle for Britain. A large number of immigrants from war-torn eastern Europe made their way to the Isles.

The austerity of the post war 1940s gave way to a rising living standard in the 1950s. A broader selection of desirable household goods, automobiles, electrical, and other consumer goods became available. The decade became a period of easy living.

The baby boomer generation began to change the styles, arts, literature, and architecture of the nation as the 1950s merged into the 1960s.

JAPAN

As hostilities ceased in the Pacific, General Douglas MacArthur was named the Supreme Allied Commander to operate in Tokyo. Allied troops, primarily American, poured into Japan. The country was to be made into a peace-loving constitutional monarchy.

MacArthur became the dictator of Japan. He did not have an Army large enough for a military occupation and worked through the remnants of the Japanese civil government.

Japan was accused of war crimes throughout the reign of Hirohito who ascended to the throne in 1926. Japan had invaded Manchuria in 1931 and China in 1937. In 1940, Japan signed a pact with Italy and Germany. The atrocities they committed in Manchuria and China were protested by the Free World.

Their brutal acts against civilians and military captives in their new war which started on 7 December, 1941, were only partially known to the rest of the war. Following the war, The known extent of their barbaric actions in carrying out medical and biological warfare experiments on prisoners, dismembering live prisoners, inhumane treatment of civilian and military captives were more fully exposed.

Japanese military killed as many as 4,000,000 in China from 1937 to 1945. An estimated 10,000,000 people in Japanese conquered territories were killed by the Nippon invaders. Only 56 Chinese POWs

(Continued page 10, **Suspension of Hostilities**)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - (From page 8)

The air base at Fukuoka, Itazuki, was unserviceable so the planes flying from Yontan on 25 November were ordered to land at Ashira at the extreme northern tip of Kyushu about 40 miles from Fukuoka. Captain Nevitt led the formation. Harley Meyer, who had flown on Nevitt's left wing, remembered that,

"Captain Nevitt radioed me with orders to break off, drag the field and check the runway for holes, etc. There were no taxiways or buildings of any kind - just bare runway. I was instructed to execute a short field landing, turn off and radio back with my opinion of the situation in general. This I did. But after turning off of the runway, I got stuck in a soft spot and had to be towed once we got a tug.

"In the meantime, the rest of the formation landed without incident, except for Second Lieutenant Herb Pitchforth (71st), who landed long and fast. He shot off the end of the runway with his brakes locked, going like hell. Luckily, his left gear dropped into an abandoned Japanese gun emplacement hole. The airplane spun to the left with the left gear remaining in the hole and came to rest with the right wing projecting over the 50 foot cliff. Had Pitchforth not accidentally hit the hole, it would have been curtains for plane and crew."

There were not enough trucks available and half the men had to rough it overnight at the airstrip. They joined their suffering comrades the following day at Fukuoka.

Two days later, 18 C-47s brought the rear air echelon into the Itazuki strip. The uniting of a large portion of the Sun Setters precipitated a crisis. There were insufficient cooking facilities for such a large group. There were no shower or shaving facilities. The men with tropically thinned blood and summer uniforms were suffering.



First planes to land at Fukuoka, 18 C-47s with our stuff

Captain Loomer, with a detachment of men overseeing the cleanup of the recently vacated area on Okinawa, may well have been the more fortunate. They were aided in their assignment by POW labor groups.

Using Japanese labor, the large assembly line building of the former factory was gutted and partitioned off for Enlisted Men's quarters. Four

(Continued page 10, **No More Bombing Missions**)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - (From page 9)



Jap Aircraft Factory Converted to EM Barracks, Itazuki

smaller buildings became quarters for the Officers. Small wood stoves were set up in the Enlisted quarters and Orderly Rooms. There was a shortage of stove pipe elbows in the theater. This was remedied without waiting for new shipments by cutting available pipe at 45 degree angles and welding them together. This eliminated much of the smoke.

Steam tables were installed in the mess areas as they were built. Refrigerators and ice machines left behind at Okinawa by departing CBs were ready for use in the mess areas and clubs. Officers and Enlisted Men's clubs soon got underway. All the while, debris in the area was being gathered and hauled away.

The regular business of the Group had to be kept up. Squadron and Headquarters Personnel Sections were combined into a new Unit Personnel Section in the **Headquarters Squadron**. They were kept busy processing men with 60 points for rotation to the States when ordered.

Headquarters staff had grown from 38 officers on 1 November to 42 officers and decreased from 133 to 126 Enlisted Men. The personnel in the squadrons were typified by the numbers in the **405th Squadron**. There were 75 Officers, 19 Flight Officers and 257 Enlisted Men assigned to the **405th** on 1 November. At the end of the month, there were 42 Officers, 19 Flight Officers, and 126 Enlisted Men. Combat crews assigned to the squadron had decreased from 20 to 16.

As Officers in **Group Headquarters** were returned to the States, Officers in the Squadrons were appointed to replace them and Officers within the Squadrons were assigned to the vacated Squadron leadership positions. New personnel within the Group had become more familiar with their assignments and performance of all was improving.

GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS

After a discouraging Thanksgiving season, a new spirit moved within the **38th**. As December opened the men set to work to get their quarters and clubs ready for use, hopefully before Christmas. Every day groups of men foraged through the Fukuoka area for items that would enhance their new clubs. The results was more than satisfactory.

Work on the new mess hall was rushed to completion and dinner was served in style on Christmas Eve. With the new steam tables backed up by great refrigeration equipment, dinner was served on trays. A permanent KP detail contributed to a new spirit in the dining areas. Japanese

(Continued page 11, No More Bombing Missions)

Suspension of Hostilities (From page 9)

were released following the Japanese surrender in 1945.

Soon after the war, International Tribunal for the Far East was set up in Japan. For Class A crimes, 25 leaders were indicted. For Class B and C crimes, 5700 were indicted. Of these, 920 were found guilty and executed. Over 5,000 received prison terms of varying length. Many of these were later commuted to time served.

Decapitation of prisoners and killing in other ways were so much a part of the military policy that it was impossible to identify and charge those who directed and carried out such killings.

The extent of trials for all manner of crimes is so extensive that space limitations do not permit their consideration here. In the "Free World", there is still considerable question and dissatisfaction with the limited adjudication of all atrocities. Much of the world still holds resentment for the lack of acceptance by the Japanese of national guilt for the extent of the atrocities.

Full demobilization of the Japanese Imperial military was accomplished by early 1946.

People who survived the first winter were living in railroad stations, public parks and the dampness of the concrete buildings which had survived. The typical houses built of bamboo and wood had been reduced to ashes in most cities. Fuel for heating and cooking was scarce for city dwellers. Food was even harder to find. The fishing fleet which had fed the nation was no longer operative.

Physically, the country needed to be completely rebuilt. Essential infrastructure (highways, railroads, power lines, housing, etc.) would have to be recreated before significant assistance for its masses could be made available. Poverty-engulfed millions would need to be sustained until essential food and shelter could become available. It was a daunting task for the former adversaries to bring about as winter approached.

Contrary to the pattern of building a post-war Germany, the Japanese social structure and culture would provide the framework for a new and democratic nation. The new constitution was to provide for universal suffrage and the educational system was to open avenues for all youth to pursue.

Houses built of bamboo and wood had been reduced to ashes in most cities. Fuel

(Continued page 11, Suspension of Hostilities)

Suspension of Hostilities *(From page 10)*

for heating and cooking was scarce for city dwellers. Food was even harder to find. The fishing fleet that had fed Japan was no longer functional. There were no harvests.

When the Japanese government under MacArthur could not develop a new constitution in keeping with his instructions, MacArthur's staff wrote a new one in one week in February 1946. Women received full equality and discrimination based on sex, creed, race, social status, or family origin was prohibited.

Universal education through the ninth grade was ordered. The American pattern for schools above the sixth grade was mandated. Rather than rote memory, training to develop thinking skills became a curriculum strategy.

Land reform brought a quick recovery to Japan's agriculture. Absentee landlords were done away with. Large land holdings were bought by the government and sold on easy terms to tenants who would work the land. The popularity of these and other land reforms sparked a new psychological momentum which aided in the acceptance of other reforms dictated by MacArthur.

Democratic labor unions were permitted under the new order. Because of their popular strength, the unions seized the opportunity to engage in political action which was more meaningful at the time than bargaining. MacArthur would not permit a general strike that was called and the unions shifted away from strong political action.

The large Zaibatsu Trust, consisting of about 15 families, had controlled Japan's heavy industry. This was to be broken up by selling stock in the companies on the open market. This was only partially successful because members of the families and friends bought up most of the stock but the move brought a considerable shuffle which brought about a partial achievement of the intentions.

The increasing work force and wages brought an increased market for essential goods. The opening of the Korean War brought an economic boom to Japan. The new democracy became the primary staging area for America's support of the embattled South Koreans.

When the peace treaty with Japan was signed in 1952, MacArthur's and America's noble ideals in bringing forth the new nation minimized the bitterness of defeat. For America, the satisfaction of having brought about a new and peaceful democracy over-

(Continued page 12, Suspension of Hostilities)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - *(From page 10)*

labor was provided for the washing of trays and other kitchen items. There would be no line to sweat for washing mess kits.

The quality of the food still left much to be desired. Even in this area, fresh butter and potatoes were appearing regularly, a harbinger of better things to come.

The men working in the Personnel Unit worked long hours endeavoring to keep the records up to date. Many of the individual records brought into the Unit files from the Squadrons were not up to date. In addition, there were now many men who had been transferred into the 38th from inactivated groups whose records were often in very poor shape. When the China Battle Star and the Air Offensive Japan Battle Star were authorized, the work of recording eligibility for these awards to the recent transfers was further complicated for lack of actual mission records. In these cases the award of the five additional points could not be granted. Credit for other actions was often in a confusing state.

Winter clothing supplies arrived which added to the comfort of the men in a large measure. During the month laundering and cleaning of clothes was made available to the Sun Setters at low cost. The laundry system was further improved when a new way of marking clothes was established. The number of lost or misdirected items decreased significantly.

On 13 December, all but 12 of the B-25s were designated to be pickled. Even the Fat Cat and the Group A-20 were destined for retirement and pickling. Unfortunately, one plane and crew of four were lost when it struck the mast of a fishing boat while on a patrol mission.

The highlight of the month was the temporary opening of the two clubs on Christmas Eve. The parties were enjoyed with exuberance as the men decided that whatever might not be particularly good, there was much that called for celebration. The record takes note that some of the more sober members of the 38th, spent the evening dodging flying beer bottles. But no injuries were noted.

On 1 December, there were 409 officers and 1258 Enlisted Men, totaling 1667. By 31 December, the numbers were 348 Officers and 674 Enlisted Men, totaling 1022. There were far more than 447 men returned to the States, many to be home for Christmas, since many of the returnees had been replaced by new arrivals during the month. The reports do not tell how the returnees celebrated but most readers will have some idea of what the homecomings were like in most cases.

The year 1945 was certainly a year long to be remembered with tears and joy by a vast throng.

A NEW YEAR AND A NEW PLANE

During January 16 Douglas A-26s were delivered to the Group at Ashiya. Orientation classes were held for the pilots which included time at Ashiya for blindfold cockpit checks. Ground school classes were also scheduled. A long written examination concluded the orientation program.

The Officers and Enlisted Men's clubs were closed to permit final finishing of construction. A hardwood floor with mahogany inlaid designs was completed in the Officer's Club. An Officer's Mess was built behind the Club area.

The Enlisted Men's Club sported a circular bar and a fire place. It was also had a hardwood floor.

The offices for the various sections were improved with partitions to separate them.

A large number of men in the Group received orders for return to the States. This necessitated more shuffling of assignments to staff the various functions of the Group. At the end of the month, there were

(Continued page 12, No More Bombing Missions)

NO MORE BOMBING MISSIONS - - - (From page 11)

more Officers in the group than enlisted men. The 823rd Squadron became a casualty of the demobilization, being down graded to a record keeping organization. All remaining personnel were transferred into the other squadrons. Several new men also joined the Group during the month.

When the weather permitted, a few surveillance missions were flown. Most of the A-26s could not be flown operationally because many of them had not been checked for Engineering acceptance. Others were in need of Engineering maintenance. The first sixteen were assigned to the **405th Squadron**. Word was received that the **38th** would soon receive at least 40 additional A-26s.

February saw the grand re-openings of the Clubs. Things were going well at Ituzaki for the **38th**. At the end of February only 41 of the 101 men in the **405th** were Enlisted Men. Twenty of its men had been shipped home during the month. Most of the B-26s were still waiting for Engineering checks.

During March, the number of hours of flying was beginning to increase. Most of the time was for training flights with a smaller number of hours being spent for surveillance flights of other routine flying. A large number of men were assigned to the Group in March. This infusion brought the ratio of Enlisted Men to Officers back up to 2:1 in the **405th**, typical of the Group at large.

More planes and men were received in April. The **405th** lost one plane due to weather. The pilot, not having sufficient instrument experience, encountered bad weather a short distance out to sea. Attempting to find space under the weather and without a radio, he descended and suddenly flicked a wing into the water. The pilot and his passenger were not seriously injured in the ensuing ditching and were picked up by Japanese fishermen who returned them to the base.

In May, the designation of the **38th** was changed to "**38th Bomb Group (Light)**". A few planes were added to the Group. On 15 May, a **405th** A-26 was lost during a surveillance flight a bit over 50 miles west of Ashiya base. It was seen to crash into the Sea of Japan, carrying its pilot, Lt. Robert Lorang, and his passenger, F/O Samuel Soto, to their deaths. Almost 50 percent of the 105 hours flown by the **405th** during the month was for these surveillance flights. Slightly less time was charged to training flights with a small balance spent for general operational activity.

In September, the **38th** was transferred to Itami Air Base near Osaka. Stanley Whonic told of his late coming to the **405th**:

General MacArthur is quoted as saying, "Old Soldiers never die; they just fade away." For those of us who flew, it might be better said, "Old fliers never die; they just fly away." I like to think that I will spend eternity flying the vast reaches of the universe.

The **38th Bomb Group** heritage has been passed on to other men who carried our colors and honors for another 67 years. Go to page 13 for more about them.

Suspension of Hostilities (From page 11)

shadowed the frustrations and grievances of the bitter years.

CHINA

The end of the war did not mean a great deal in China. The Nationalists and the Communist armies now battled one another without the distraction of the Japanese army. A struggle which had started in the early 20s to unify China and to put down the War Lords, had turned into a struggle between the two factions.

The post war struggle continued until 1950 when the Nationalists withdrew to Formosa which had been given to China in 1945. There has never been a treaty to end this conflict which still is a destabilizing element in International affairs.

ASIAN INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLES

Even before the war, independence movements had risen to throw off the colonial domination in the area. During the war, the Allied governments managed to manipulate the various movements in order to focus the war on Japan and its occupation of the European colonies. The Japanese managed to co-opt some of the independence groups to some degree of cooperation with promises vague and unfulfilled.

The struggle of the various countries on the Malay peninsula continued with the different national groups asserting their independence from colonial governments. The period since World War II has been marked by political unrest and instability. In the Dutch East Indies, the largest of the post war new nations, Indonesia, has also passed through the uncertainty of different power struggles.

India and the other subcontinent countries gained their independence from the British. They continue to keep the rest of the world on edge with their competitive belligerence. India has become the world's second largest country in population providing a large pool of labor in the advanced technology of the world.

Australia recovered from the war era with a generally booming economy and offered attractive inducements for migrants to help it develop its natural resources. There has been a significant political stability and the nation has been aligned with the western nations in efforts to bring stability to the other smaller nations throughout the Pacific rim nations.

COMPOSITE STATISTICS, 405TH SQUADRON

<u>MISSION TYPE</u>	<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
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	<u>DAY</u>		
Attack	415	2601	13,384:35
Weather	51	58	372:00
Armed Reco	86	130	638:00
Photo	7	7	21:15
Search	17	57	329:00
Courier	40	40	206:05
Escort	9	14	53:10
TOTAL	625	2907	15,004:05

NIGHT

Attack	26	123	145:40
Weather	4	4	14:55
Armed Reco	16	40	124:15
Photo	1	1	2:30
Spotting	29	29	118:25
TOTAL	76	197	405:45

GRAND TOT. 701 3104 15,409:50

TONS OF BOMBS DROPPED 1,916

ROUNDS AMMO EXPENDED 50 CAL. 3,019,688

ENEMY A/C DESTROYED IN AIR 39

ENEMY A/C PROBABLY DESTROYED IN AIR 33

ENEMY A/C DAMAGED IN AIR 10

ENEMY A/C DESTROYED ON GROUND 119

ENEMY A/C PROBABLY DESTROYED ON GROUND 96

ENEMY A/C DAMAGED ON GROUND 103

ENEMY SHIPPING SUNK (tons) 74,840

ENEMY SHIPS PROBABLY SUNK (tons) 24,525

ENEMY SHIPS DAMAGED (tons) 111,180

OWN A/C LOST IN COMBAT 86

OWN PERSONNEL MIA 80

OWN PERSONNEL KIA 53

OWN PERSONNEL K, Not In Action 20

OWN PERSONNEL Wounded IA 50

AWARDS

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR 1

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS 4

LEGION OF MERIT 1

SILVER STAR 43

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS 46

SOLDIER'S MEDAL 9

BRONZE STAR 4

AIR MEDAL 772

PURPLE HEART 103

PRESIDENTIAL CITATION 4

CAMPAIGNS

GUADALCANAL	NORTHERN SOLOMONS
NEW GUINEA	PAPUAN
BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO	WESTERN PACIFIC
SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES	LUZON
CHINA COAST	AIR OFFENSIVE AGAINST JAPAN

38TH Bomb Group Heritage History

Constituted **38th Bomb Group (Medium)** 20 Nov. 1940

Activated 15 Jan. 1941

Re-designated **38th Bomb Group (Light)** May 1946

Established **38th Bombardment Wing, Light**

10 Aug. 1948

Activated 18 Aug. 1948

Inactivated 1 April 1949

Re-activated 1 Jan. 1953

Laon –Couvron Air Base, France

Squadrons, **71st, 405th, 822nd**

B-26s (A-26 Invader)

B-57 Canberra, April 1955, Painted gloss black,

Re-designated **38th Bombardment Wing, Tactical**

1 Oct. 1955

- Acrobatic team named "**Black Knights**", 5 planes

- Performed at several air shows in western

Europe, including 1957 Paris Air Show.

- Only tactical bomber show team in the world.

Re-designated **38th Tactical Missile Wing** 18 June

1958

Hahn Air Base, Germany

TM-67A Matador cruise missile

Discontinued and inactivated 25 Sept. 1966

Re-designated **38th Flying Training Wing** 22 Mar. 1972

Activated 1 Aug. 1972

Laredo AFB

Inactivated 28 Aug.. 1973

Activated, Moody AFB, 1 Dec. 1973

Inactivated 1 Dec. 1975

Re-designated **38th Tactical Missile Wing** 4 Dec. 1984

Activated 1 Apr. 1985

Wueschheim Air Base, West Germany

Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles (GLCM)

Inactivated 22 Aug. 1990

Re-designated **38th Engineering Installation Wing**

1 Nov. 1994

Activated 8 Nov. 1994

Tinker AFB, OK

Communication –computer software for AF & DOD

Inactivated 3 Feb. 2000

Re-designated **38th Combat Support Wing** 19 Apr. 2004

Activated 25 May 2004

Ramstein, Germ.

Inactivated 1 May 2007

The Air Force assigned unit numbers to preserve the identity of organizations which had served with distinction in earlier war.

From Wikipedia

UNUSUAL MEETING - David Gunn

My wife and I flew out of San Diego on a **Southwest Airlines** flight on June 18, headed for Reno. During our planned layover in San Jose we rented a car and visited Kay's older sister (90 years) about 50 miles from the airport. Later we would fly on to Reno to see our 10 month old Great Granddaughter.

As we were flying along at 30,000 toward San Jose, I did some reading and also looking at the landscape way below. In my musings, I thought back to my flying days and then wondered if the guys in the front cockpit ever got sort of tired of the same old routine flying.

When we landed at San Jose, I noticed the two pilots standing with their bags in the walkway into the terminal. Kay and I walked on into the terminal and soon found restrooms which we took advantage of.

When I came out, these two pilots walked up and parked their bags and one went into the restroom. As I waited for Kay, I ventured to strike up a conversation with the pilot standing guard over their luggage.

I said, with a sort of sheepish grin on my face, "I was wondering during the flight if you guys ever get tired of the same old routine flying." The man responded, "No, not really. I always enjoy the thrill of flying."

I came back with a more positive expression on my face and a firmer voice, "I flew during the war and I always loved flying."

He asked, "What did you fly?"

I responded that I had flown B-25s. He replied that his Dad had flown in B-25s, also, and asked where I had flown. I told him that I flew in the Southwest Pacific - New Guinea up to the Philippines. He told me his Dad had flown as a gunner with the **38th Bomb Group**.

I said, "The **38th**!!, I flew with the 38th!" He said that his Dad had been with the **Wolf Pack**. I said, "Oh, that was the **71st**. I flew in the **405th**; the **Green Dragons**. Does your Dad know about the **38th Bomb Group Association**? I'm the editor of their newsletter." While talking, I pulled out my billfold to get one of the business cards Harry Terrell gave me with the **38th Bomb Group** logo.

"Oh, yea, he goes to the reunions - in Hawaii last Fall." I asked his Dad's name and he responded, "Curtis Hunt." And I replied, "Yea, I remember meeting him in Hawaii." I gave him my card and said, "Give this to your Dad and tell him we met."

On July 27, I received a telephone call from Curtis. We had a great conversation. Both of his sons are airline pilots. The man flying our **Southwest** plane is based out of Houston. The other flies for **Delta Airlines** on their national and international routes.

Do the "laws of probability" provide for such an incident? Very rarely, I think.

NAVY FLIERS HAD IT MADE - Bob Lamb, 823rd Sqd.

On 4 June, 1945, I was selected as part of two flight crews to go to Biak to pick up a new B-25 for the **38th**. We "dead-headed" one way in a plane called **Umbriago**.

It was necessary to refuel at Tacloban. It so happened that Leyte Gulf was FULL of American ships - the **Third Fleet** - four or five hundred it seemed. We learned that there were 18 carriers among them.

When we were ready to depart, we discovered that our artificial horizon was not working. We would have to spend a couple of nights waiting for it to be fixed. Upon investigating I found that the **USS Belleau Wood** was part of the armada and I knew that a friend of mine was part of the crew. We, five of us, decide to make a visit.

We hopped aboard a water taxi and were taken to this "junior" sized carrier. The **Shangri La**, a full sized carrier near by, really dwarfed the **Belleau Wood**. Nevertheless, its 25 planes had destroyed 109 Japanese planes in the previous four months.

Contrary to my imagination, there were only four Annapolis grads on board, the Commanding Officer, the Executive Officer, and two Ensigns. One of the latter was assigned as our guide since my friend had been left back in San Diego.

We were shown their barbershop, laundry, machine shops, the galley, storerooms, and especially their soda fountain. Fortunately for us, the fountain was closed to business for inventory and the five of us were given two half gallons of ice cream. We eagerly consumed the ice cream and fountain cokes.

Due to the thorough tour, we missed the last water taxi back to land. Those in command invited us to spend the night. We cleaned up for dinner and lounged in leather upholstered chairs before dinner. The dinner served by Negro waiters in white uniforms was steak, rare to medium, on silver platters, real lemonade, and more ice cream at tables with white cloth tablecloths and napkins. It was indeed a real dining pleasure and memorable occasion, challenging our manners for many reasons.

After dinner, we were invited to join a select group on chairs positioned on a large elevator below the flight deck. The ship's Captain welcomed us over the loud speaker before we watched "National Velvet" starring Elizabeth Taylor.

They assigned us three officers to two-man rooms with innerspring mattresses in bunk beds, two sheets, bedspread, individual desks wall safes, shelf space, and air conditioning - NO mosquito netting. All drinking water was ice water. Ironically, since we were not accustomed to such luxury as those mattresses provided, our night's rest was the only negative factor during our luxurious visit.

We were advised to leave our shoes outside the door of the officers' quarters over night. In the morning we found them more polished than they had ever been since we had left the States.

Breakfast included real maple syrup for our flapjacks, toast from "pop up" toasters, and chilled apples with the "dew" still on them.

We thanked our hosts many times for their special treat before boarding the water taxi. It was obviously a "local" because we made five or six stops *en route* to the landing.

With a certain feeling of regret, we turned to the war we had to fight and a special job to do. We took care of our duties and boarded **Umbriago** to head for Peleliu Island for an overnight stop before reaching Biak.

"The Navy gets the gravy while the Army gets the beans."

Trivia note: I found it most interesting that making purchases at the Biak Post Exchange could be very confusing. We dealt with Dutch Guilders, Philippine Pesos, Australian Pounds, and American Dollars each with different exchange rates.

"PREPARE TO BE PAMPERED"

Many years ago I was staying at Town and Country Inn in San Diego on a business trip. They provided outstanding guest services, a special ambiance and great hospitality in keeping with their slogan, "Prepare to be pampered." I was recently reminded of that slogan as a group of eight men from St. Leonard Retirement Center set out on a journey to Columbus Airport to join a party of 39 veterans and 17 "guardians" for an "Honor Flight" to Washington, D.C.

After "Breakfast at Starbucks" this group was first to board the plane and seated in the first several rows. Our first of many truly heartwarming experiences occurred as we disembarked at Baltimore/Washington Airport. We were the last to leave the plane and several wheelchairs were waiting for our use as we emerged from the plane. As we emerged into the terminal, people waiting to board the plane stood and applauded, shook our hands and expressed gratitude for our service, giving us an unforgettable welcome to the area.

With the assistance of our guardians, we were shepherded through the terminal to our "Spirit Tour" bus, our headquarters for the next several hours. Without our guardians, the whole operation would have been impractical. They had a supply of disposable cameras for those in the group who had not brought a camera. They provided an unlimited supply of cold drinking water. They supported us with never ending patience, empathy, and good cheer.

Several other Honor Flights were scheduled that weekend. We joined nearly 600 other veterans that day, the largest such group of veterans to visit the World War II Memorial since its dedication in 2004.

Senator Bob Dole led the charge for the construction of the Memorial and had a part in the dedication. Out of his loyalty to the fraternity of veterans of which he is a member, he returns to this site whenever an Honor Flight is scheduled to appear. He was present on our day to visit and take pictures with us.

Dean was the guardian of our small group and made sure we didn't miss anything, even the appearance of "Kilroy". His enthusiasm and desire to keep the seven of us together for pictures and verbal description of details was most commendable. We were stopped occasionally at the memorial by strangers to visit briefly, to shake our hands, adding their appreciation for our service to our country over 60 years ago. These incidents were very humbling.

Our bus received special attention in the form of a camera crew who interview us all to provide a background for a human-interest story. One of the wheelchair veterans had been a prisoner of war in Germany for two and a half years, becoming a close friend with another POW during those days. The two had kept in close touch for over 60 years but had never been able to get together - until now. It came as a total surprise to our friend on the plane. Their families were in on this special surprise.

The schedule provided an opportunity to visit the Korean and Viet Nam memorials. There was also a stop at the U. S. Navy Memorial where we witnessed an impres-

sive flag ceremony. We ended our tour with a slow cruise passed the Iwo Jima Memorial. Time did not permit us to stop and view it on foot. Its significance and size were impressive.

Our driver's name was Campbell, a Viet Nam veteran, whose nickname was "Soup". He said it was because he was "m-m-m good." He was loquacious and humorous in his description of sights and points of interest. His most impressive talent was the way he could maneuver his tour bus, parallel parking it in a space no more than three or four feet longer than the bus.

Our guardians were truly special people. They had each paid their own air fare and given half a weekend to be of special service to a group of old geezers. One of our guardians, Bill, teaches American History to Middle School students. One of his assignments is to have his students write a letter to a veteran to thank him for his service. Each of us received two of these letters as parting gifts. Bill and his wife, also a guardian, say they, "Live for the opportunity to participate in these Honor Flights." We were also given Certificates of Recognition, a VFW pin shaped like Ohio, a picture of the Memorial on a magnet, and a beautiful picture book, "World War II Memorial, Jewel of the Mall." Among the gifts was also a copy of an original poem, "Yesterday."

On our return to Columbus, we received more of the same ovations and recognitions from passengers and others. We had truly been pampered. Our memories of this day will be everlasting. Equally everlasting will be the teary eyes, the lumps in our throats, and heart-warming emotions we experienced from the adulation of total strangers. We truly had been pampered.

Bob Lamb

The "Honor Flight" program was conceived by Earl Morse, a Physician Assistant and Retired Air Force Captain, to honor veterans he has taken care of for the past 27 years. After retiring from the Air Force in 1998, Earl was hired by the Department of Veterans Affairs to work in a small clinic in Springfield, Ohio.

In 2004, he talked with some of his veteran patients about visiting the WW II Memorial. Most felt they probably could not afford such a trip. Others were physically unable to consider the visit. Being a member of the aero club at Wright-Patterson, he proposed that members consider flying small groups of veterans in their personal planes to Washington at no cost to the veterans. The first flights took place in 2005. The Honor Flight program has blossomed since.

Forty eight affiliated programs in 23 states have been formed which organize such trips for veterans in their areas. The National Office takes applications from veterans not near a regional program.

Because America is losing 1200 WW II Veterans a day, such men have a priority on the list. Disabled veterans of any war and veterans with terminal diseases also have a higher priority.

To learn more about the program and to apply, go to:

www.honorflight.org/

Guardian volunteers are also needed.

S/T Report

This is the 12th issue of the News letter written by Dave Gunn. Each and everyone has been a gem. Dave set out to record in a chronological order the many events that the 38th Bomb Group took part in during 3 1/2 years of Combat. Many of you may not know that Dave is still operating an active fruit and vegetable ranch. There is an awful lot of irrigating to be done, weeds to fight and an orchard to prune. To this you add the time for research and writing the news letter and you find a man who has burned a lot of midnight oil.

Dave has asked for a respite from the January 2009 news letter and I will attempt to fill his very large shoes for the January issue. This issue will have mostly the Dayton reunion news so do not expect to see a polished news letter of the kind you have seen during the past four years.

All of our membership is paid through December 2008. Our treasury is holding it's own and the web site is getting larger as new items are entered. I hope to see many of you in Dayton.

PLANES FLOWN BY THE 38TH



Douglas B-18 Bolo— assigned at Langley and used at Jackson,



MARTIN B-26 MARAUDER

B-26 MARTIN MARAUDER Trained with the B-26 at Jackson and flown into combat by the 69th and 70th Squadrons in the South Pacific Area. Two B-26s of the 69th flew in the Battle of Midway.



The 71st and 405th were retrained in the B-25 at Columbia SC and Patterson Field, Ohio. The two squadrons flew their B-25s to Australia in July and August of 1942. The 822nd and 823rd squadrons were added in May of 1943. The 38th was converted to Strafers in 1943 and become the Japanese worst nightmare



Douglas A-26 Invader flown by the 38th Bomb Group (L) in Japan



B-57 Canberra Bomber flown by the 38th in Leon France

SEE YOU IN DAYTON