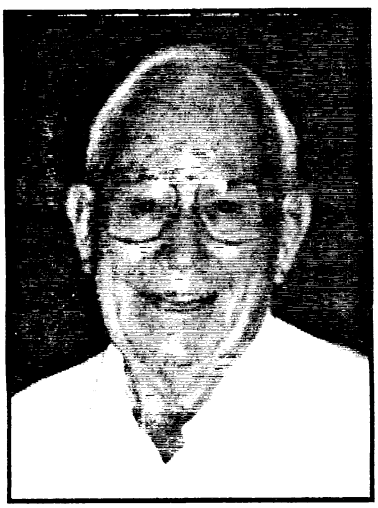
THE 38TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION WWII JANUARY 2001



This is the first presidents message since the Las Vegas Reunion. Our reunion went smoothly due to the hard work and devotion of Terry Terrell our outgoing president. I wish to extend the thanks of the entire Association for a job well done. One of the things I hope to do is set up a web site that is easily accessible. Our present site is very difficult to access and the site ,which is a free one, is maxed out. Our book's Publication during the next year is my goal and I will keep you informed of it's progress. The Colorado Springs Convention Bureau has been contacted and a lot information has been received. John Mutu has been contacted and he is doing some preliminary checking. Dewey B Haynes, Squadron Rep. for the 822nd suffered a stoke at Thanksgiving. The last word was that he is well on the way to recovery. Our Prayers are with you, Dewey. We have a new president . May our Country find pride in the new administration and I hope we can develop uniform voting standards. I wish all of you a Happy and Peaceful New Year.
Orland Gage
President

Note From The S/T

We urgently request that each of you please check your entry in the roster for errors. Please bring any changes to my attention. Also there are 40 members that last paid their dues in '97/98/99. We are entering the '01/02 dues term and if I do not receive their dues before the May 2001 news letter these members will be placed on the Inative roster.
Thanks guys. Bill McKinstry

IN EVER-HONORED MEMORY"

Since the publication of the September 2000 newsletter and as of December 29th. 2000, we have been informed of these veterans of the 38th Bomb Group that have gone to their final resting place.

"Rest in Peace Brothers"

Worthington. Gaylord C.	71st
Mondelli. Leslie L	405th
Roberts. Jacob M. (LM)	405th
Rogers, Johnnie D.	405th
Hagler, Darrell M.	822nd
Bill Dickerson	823rd
Coit (Bud) Yeoman	405th

HQ–16	71st–130	822nd–70
69th-2	89th-1	823rd–69
70th–51	405th–122	UNK 3

TOTAL = 464

2001/2002
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ADDITIONAL LIFE MEMBERS
as of 11/24/00

The Association has gained the following new Life Members since the listing in the September 2000 SunSetters newsletter: (continues on the next column)

NEW MEMBERS FOR 1999-2000

1.	HANSON. BRUCE V.	71ST
2.	HOGUE. CALVIN K.Jr.	71ST
3.	HUNT. CURTIS R.	71ST
4.	McKAY, RALPH H.	71ST
5.	RYFF. JAMES T.	71ST
6.	SILKUNAS, STANLEY G.	71ST
7.	HUDSON. JOHN R.	89TH
8.	BASKETT, L. DALE	405TH
9.	EDWARDS, CLARENCE L."JACK"	405TH
10.	HAMMACK, GEORGE C.	405TH
11.	HARROD, ROYCE	405TH
12.	IVEY. RAY	405TH
13.	KEATING. LAWRENCE P.	405TH
14.	NAESER, LEN	405TH
15.	PERRETT, JOSEPH D.Jr.	405TH
16.	WILKES. MAGEE	405TH
17.	WILSON. LEWIS C.	405TH
18.	GRADY. JOHN R.	822ND
19.	KINNEY HOWARD P.	822ND
20.	MAHER. RICHARD P.	822ND
21	THOMPSON. CURTI	822ND
22.	ALEX, MICHAEL G.	823RD
23	LUNDH, JAMES N.	823RD
24.	SIMMONS. JOHN R.	823RD
25.	BRADY. JOHN M.	ASC
26.	BRYAN. ELLIOTT	ASC
27.	CLEVELAND. LEWIS	ASC
28.	CONNER. EDWARD	ASC
29.	DEAS, WALT	ASC
30.	DAUGHERTY, DANIEL J.(LM)	ASC
31.	GAVIN, WILLIAM M.	ASC
32.	McCLAREN, KAREN	ASC
33.	OUINN. IAN	ASC
34.	SHERLOCK. JAY	ASC
35.	SVIBEN DONALD J.	ASC

NEW MEMBERS FOR JAN. 2001
SUNSETTER' S NEWSLETTER.
AS OF 11/24/00

Ryff. James T.	71st
Hunt. Curtis R.(LM)	71st
Hammack. George C.	405th
Simmons. John R.(LM)	823rd
Bennett. Robert C.	ASC
Conner. Edward	ASC
Daugherty, Daniel J.(LM)	ASC
Silva. Kenneth	ASC

(new life members)
Hung, Curtis R.--71st/Daugherty, Daniel J.–ASC
Total 289 Breakdown by Squadron:

HO	71st	89th	405th	822nd	823rd	ASC
8	62	1	104	53	52	9

NEW MEMBERS FOR JAN. 2001
SUNSETTER' S NEWSLETTER.
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Ryff. James T.	71st
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Silva. Kenneth	ASC
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ADDITIONAL LIFE MEMBERS
as of 11/24/00

The Association has gained the following new Life Members since the listing in the September 2000 SunSetters newsletter:

Hunt, Curtis R.————71st
Daugherty. Daniel J.—ASC

Here is the breakdown. by squadron. of the total number of members who have contributed $100 to the Life Membership Fund:

HO	71st	89th	405th	822nd	823rd	ASC
8	62	1	104	53	52	9
2	14		24	13	15	<Dec.

TOTAL = 289

Editors notes: Walter Deas (ACS) recommends the book "Wrecks & Reefs" by Neil Whiting, published by Robert Brown & Asso. (QLD) Pty, Ltd, P. O. Box 1299, Cooparoo, QLD. 4151, AU. This book has some interesting stories on B-25 crashes in the New Guinea area. I plan to publish some excerpts at a later time as news letter space permits.

Editor's Notes

We have nothing new to report on the 38th history. Suggest you contact the 22nd BGp web site, Www.redraiders22bg.com. They are posting the status of their history being prepared by Larry Hickey.

Larry must finish that history before he finishes The 38th history. Also contact Don Evans direct At e-mail DEvansUSAF@aol.com

38th Bomb Group Logo

The above modified logo was approved at the last reunion. Matt Gac had the logo developed and it will be displayed in museums. We are unable to present it in color but it is great. Contact Matt for more information. E-mail flyboymg@yahoo.com

(Following extracted from "Wrecks and Reefs" Published by Robert Brown Associates P.O. Box 1299, Corporal, QLD 4151, Australia)

Pieces of History

WRECKS AND REEFS

LOCALE 3d - B-25D

MITCHELL BOMBER The model 'D' B-25 Mitchell is similar to the 'C' model except it was built at the new North American Aviation plant at Kansas City instead of the Inglewood plant.

B-25D Mitchell bomber, serial number 41-30496 of 71st Bomb Squadron, 38th Bomb Group, under the command of pilot Ist Lt Ercoli Ducci and copilot 2nd Lt Harry Mack, departed from Durrand airstrip at 1:36 p.m. on July 27, 1943, to carry out bombing practice on the old SS Pruth wreck.

This was the second practice mission this day for the aircraft and crew, (continued on page 5)

World War II THE 405th BOMB SQUADRON'S INCARCERATION

Roy Lee Grover

The 38th Bomb Group was located on the Townsville Airport in late 1942. We had wooden open bay barracks which were an improvement over the tent city that we had in Charters Towers. A mission was called and off we went to New Guinea. The plan called for us to land at a newly constructed strip, load bombs and ammunition and complete our mission and return to Townsville. It was to be done in one day. The target was the Japanese forces trying to come over the Owen-Stanley mountains to destroy Moresby with its' airstrips. The nightly Japanese radio broadcasts warned that Moresby would be a bucket of blood. (We listened to the broadcasts because of the good music each night.)

The rain was very heavy when we landed and the taxi ways were new and a little soft. The loading was very slow because of the rain and the soft ground. Therefore, we were forced to spend the night. Tents, cots, misquote nets were provided. We had beans for dinner that night and for 5 nights more. The next morning the loaded aircraft sunk into the taxi ways and revetment areas as we tried to taxi to the runway.

Five days later were able to fly back to Townsville after unloading the bombs and digging our airplanes out of the mud. The crews did not have any personal items with them, not even a toothbrush. When we landed, we were a sorry sight. Everyone wanted a bath, clean cloths and a decent meal. Such was not to be. Our barracks had been given to another organization and our belongings stored in a room that we could not locate. We showered and washed ur cloths in the shower. Our cloths dried quickly as we wore then outside looking for a way to town. We arrived at the Officer's Club at about 4:45 p.m. and dinner was to be served at 5:00. The Provost Marshall came in and announced that everyone must have on a tie at 5 o'clock or be arrested. Our explanations fell on deaf ears. At 5 o'clock the Provost ordered all without tie to leave or be arrested. Capt. Cheli (sounds like Kelli) stated that if he was going to be arrested, it would be for something he did. He took a tray of glasses from a passing waiter and tossed the tray and glasses over the balcony. (the club was built on stilts) The rest of the flight crews joined in and threw the furniture over the railing. The 405th flight crews wound up in the stockade.

After about 4 hours, General Walker came down and apologized for the trouble and informed us that we were needed in New Guinea next morning and our mission would take a few days so we were to take our personal belongings with us. It was a maximum effort, but when we got to New Guinea there was not much to do. It was not long after that, the Group was ordered to move to New Guinea. There was no base ready for us but we moved and it was only coincidental that the move came right after the "Club Incident" I believe that we were the first Bomb Group permanently stationed in New Guinea. The move and the fiasco of the move is another story. The ground personal spent 5 days of tropical heat on a rocking ship in view of the lush green shore with no air conditioning. Capt. Cheli's action did beget reaction or so it seemed.

The Past Presidents Message

It's indeed an honor and a privilege to pass the gavel to my good friend and former vice president, Orland Gage. I wish to thank him for his support in the reunion planning and for the help that he and Flora provided in the Hospitality room at the reunion.

I want to express my deep appreciation to Bill and Cledie McKinstry for their loyal and untiring support over the last two years. It was a shocker to have them miss out on much of the reunion due to the flu, and Bill was hospitalized for one day.

I want to express my appreciation for the fine job Jim Thoren did in continuing to edit and publish The Sun Setter newsletter after the Paco Press closed its doors and we lost our talented editor, Mary Jane Aurdal. On top of that he and Ruth made a major move from the old family home to much smaller and more manageable digs last August.

Thanks to Warren and Mary Lee for their "shipping, receiving, and storage" operation there in Las Vegas. Don't know what we would have done without them, and Cindy Lee did a great job, as always, with the colorful name tags and certificates. And I wish to thank the members and their wives who helped in the hospitality room, it was a real team effort!

A special thanks to Swede Larson, 70th Squadron, for being our speaker at the Welcome Dinner, and thanks to Chick Alford for the invocations and opening prayers.

We had a great time together in Las Vegas, however our hospitality room had a lot of competition from the fabulous attractions within walking distance of the hotel. The reunion was attended by one hundred and eleven members and ninety three guests. There were two hundred and twenty five registered, but we had twenty one who canceled. Compared to Little Rock, with two hundred and fifty nine registered and sixteen cancellations we experienced a sixteen percent loss in attendance.

Because so many cannot make it to the reunions it's all the more important for us to "net work" with telephone calls, e-mail, and visits with old friends and buddies to keep old friendships alive! The main purpose of the Association is to promote camaraderie among former members of the 38th Bomb Group, so let's keep in touch with our buddies!

Thanks again for all the support you gave me after we lost our good friend and President, Dale Howieson, after less than five months in office. Look forward to seeing you all at Reunion 2002 in Colorado Springs.

(wrecks and Reefs continued from Page 3)

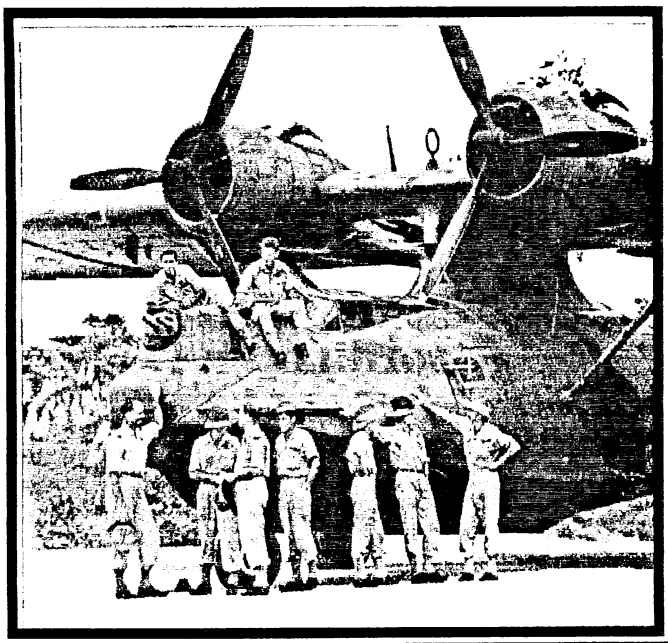
the first being at 8:00 a.m. take off and 10:58 a.m. landing. The other crew members in the aircraft for the mission were bombardier Ist Lt William Shank, engineer S/Sgt Elwood Norton and radio operator T/Sgt Albert Steele.

Ducci and his crew were practicing the low-level skip-bombing method of attack on the second flight this day when a bomb skipped too high and knocked off the stabilizer on the tail of the aircraft. The pilots struggled to control the aircraft, but, without the stabilizer, it was virtually uncontrollable. For seven or eight minutes, the stricken Mitchell staggered through the air before finally crashing onto the reef west of Bavo Island, killing all on board.

The marine section air-sea rescue launch was immediately on the scene and the bodies of Ducci, Mack and Steele were recovered with extreme difficulty during the rest of the afternoon and the following day.

The next day, July 29, Sergeant Ritchey from the RAAF marine section and six Americans from the squadron proceeded to the scene of the crash in the squadron's boat to recover the remaining two bodies from the wreck.

(continued on page 6)



Mission Impossible

It was early on the morning of November 10, 1944 when the SOS came through. Three American B-25 bombers had been shot down during a raid on ;the Japanese base at Wewak. The crew of one had somehow survived and were now huddled in a dinghy, buffeted by heavy seas, sitting like ducks in easy range of the enemy guns.
An air-sea rescue seemed like mission impossible, but the crew of RAAF Catalina flying boat A24-92, based at Madang, two hours away, decided to give it a go.

Now more than a half a century on , crew member Phil Lindsay, recalls how he was warned of the risks as he stripped the plane of armour and guns for light flight action.
"The skipper told me, "They're about 200 yards off the Jap camp, I don't think we will be coming back." Lindsay had lost a brother in the war was given the chance to refuse the mission. He insisted, however, on going.
"Skip, I told him, "I couldn't live with myself if I squibbed it. Though his memory is not so trustworthy as it once was, and his eye sight and his hearing may be failing, the 82 year old Lindsay remembers vividly the events of that far off afternoon: how, under deafening cover of bombs dropped on the base by 18 RAAF Beauforts, the Cat managed to land; how, within range of the Japanese guns, the plane was maneuvered close to the dinghy; how using ropes, the Americans were dragged to safety.

"First aboard was the pilot. He was badly knocked about. His face was black and pulped, his lips badly swollen, as if he had been struck in ;the face when the plane crashed." Only after several attempts did the Cat finally lift off and head for home. This story is told in a book "Rescue at Wewak, written by Lindsay's wife.
E-mail: helind@bigpond.com.au

(Pieces of History continued from page 5)
The bodies had only just been retrieved and the boat was about to get under way when, without warning, the boat exploded in a ball of flame from the fumes of leaking fuel in the bilges. All on board leapt over the side into the water and helplessly watched as the craft burnt to the waterline and sank. With the aid of a life raft, dropped by a plane who saw they were in distress, the ill-fated group set out for the nearest land at Bavo Island, almost a mile away. As they reached the island, a squadron of American B-17 Flying Fortress aircraft, who were unaware of their predicament, commenced a three-hour practice bombing run from a height of 30,000 ft on the island, which had been nicknamed 'Battleship Island'. The helpless men ducked into crevices and overhanging ledges around the rocky island and made themselves as small as possible as the bombs rained down on the flat island. One of the bombs burst close to the group, badly mangling the knee of an American.

At the height of the bombing, the RAAF rescue launch from 45 OBU Marine Section arrived from Port Moresby to help with the recovery of the bodies from the wrecked aircraft and anchored at the edge of the shoaling reef, three miles away from the island. A small boat was launched with Medical Officer Flight Lieutenant John Shelton and another crew member on board. In a lull in the bombing, they set out to locate the other rescuers. The men were soon spotted on the island and Shelton, without concern for his life, proceeded to the island in between a bombing runs to help the hapless men. Wading ashore, Shelton discovered four of the men to be seriously wounded and, while the bombing continued, he treated the injured men with morphia.
Eventually, the stranded group were seen by a B-25 aircraft observing the bombing runs. (continued on page 7)

(Pieces of History continued from page 6)

The 8-25 signaled the Fortresses to refrain from their bombing practice, then flew over at low altitude and dropped a rubber dinghy to help the group escape from their precarious position.

Shelton was awarded the Medal of Freedom without Palm by the United States Army and the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his part in this recovery, and for numerous other rescues of crew members or the recovery of bodies from downed aircraft. His actions called for outstanding devotion to duty and great risk to his own life.

The remains of 41-30496 today have blended into the surrounding environment of the sandy weed-covered bottom and are covered in luxuriant growths of spongy soft coral, hard corals and brown algae. The shell of the fuselage has disintegrated or was removed in the recovery operation of the crew, leaving the cockpit, where Ducci and Mack struggled to control the aircraft, open to the sparkling surface of the sea 3 m above it. At low tide the tips of the large propellers break the surface while nearby the dorsal turret machine gun still remains fixed to the electrically-controlled mounting ring.

This is a difficult aircraft to locate as it is some distance from the mainland and from prominent features to provide transients. the best means of locating the wreck is to wait until low tide when the tips of the propellers project out of the water. (Above extraction from Wrecks and Reefs provided by ASC member Walter Deas)

THE 38TH BG EMAIL ADDRESSES

12/09/00

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