



Attached to
THIS ISSUE

Roster

Ever Honored

Life Members

New members

e-mail addresses

The 38th Bomb Grp Assn

January 2002

President's Column

Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban have sent our country a wake up call. Our leader has responded and we again are at war. The Media will complain that we are bombing civilians and innocent people are dying. When the rulers of a nation have called a jihad and calls for death to the infidels, that makes all members of that nation subject to the results of the war. War and killing are never easy, but winning a war is a winner take all type of action and requires our total effort. This is a quiet time in regards to reunion planning. We have the outlines and will flesh out the plans in the spring. Oct 1,2,3, Radisson Inn North, 8110 N Academy Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80920 Tel #719-598-5770. We have reserved 75 rooms and can have up to 150. The Academy is closed to tours, we hope it will be reopened by the time of our reunion I for one am looking forward to October of 2002 as a time to visit with those who served with the 38th. We are fewer in number and still have great pride in our own squadron, but what the Group did as a whole is my pride and joy. Their successes in peace time and their families are all of interest. We are all in the twilight of our lives and love and compassion are the norm for all of us. I hope the holiday season was a dandy and wish all of you a happy and healthy New Year.

May God Bless America.
O r l a n d G a g e

Mission: Tarumizv, Kyushv

By Jack Cox 405th Sqdn

(This is Jack's memory of August 5, 1945, some details maybe affected by the passage of time)

The night before the mission, after having seen our names on the next day's mission list, we all met in the Group Headquarters tent on Okinawa, for briefing. You were always uneasy after seeing the mission list, not knowing what to expect.

But that evening things didn't get any easier when the briefer stepped up to the map and pointed the next day's target—Kagashima bay! A low chorus of "Oh no" as the track showed us going through the narrow mouth of the bay, an area of Japanese real estate almost solid of little red dots that showed the location of ack ack emplacements.

The briefer was quick to allay some of our misgivings by advising us that the guns were upon the headlands surrounding the entrance to the bay. While I do not remember, it seems they were a few hundred feet high. The briefer continued "Those guns cannot be lowered below zero degrees, and you are going in right on the deck, below their field of fire.

Then another shocker, it would be a 500 plane mission. That may no seem like much to those that flew in Europe, but to us was unusual as we normally flew as single group missions. This was to be a mix of fighter, heavies, and with us at low level.

The next morning after squadron briefing, we picked up escape kit, etc. climbed on to trucks, and headed to Yontan airstrip. (Continued on page 2)

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PLEASE NOTE: Save your copy of the e-mail addresses. Future issues of the news letter will publish only additions, changes, or corrections to the e-mail addresses. Notify Bill McKinstry for inclusion. New members can obtain complete address listings from Bill.

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Editors comments: The May issue of the news letter will have the information on the October reunion for your guidance. Now is the time to start planning to attend.

Preliminary copies of history of the 22nd BGp, 5th AF are available from Don L. Evans, P.O. Box 286, Bonsall, CA 92003, Tel#760-726-6963, e-mail DEvasUSAF@aol.com 22nd BGp Assn. 2 volumes, \$51.00 Postpaid (This history, by Walter Gaylor, parallels information that will also appear in the 38th history. It has been provided to Hickey for the histories he is working on, see enclosed order form.)

Note: Correction, Harold Moss, advises he was not the source for the Okinawa typhoon pictures in the Sept 01, issue. My apologies to the source.

(Continued from page 1) (Mission to Tarumizu)

It was some kind of strip, jam packed with all types of airplanes all over the place.

Lt. Brady was assigned the slot position of our squadron. I was flying number five on his right wing. It was really something to watch the 38th take off. We all followed pretty much two by two up the taxi way to the end of the runway for takeoff. The lead flight would start take off, flight units, followed by 3-4 second intervals by the balance of the squadron in pairs, one slipping to the left and the other to the right. With 24 planes, the entire group in the air or rolling within about 2 minutes. The lead plane would fly out about 5 minutes and make a slow turn to the left. By the time he came back over the field, the group would be in formation.

We flew a loose formation on our way to Kyushu, and I remember a small volcanic island we always went over where you could smell the sulfur even up at our altitude.

By the time Kyushu began to show up we had tightened up the formation and dropped right down on the deck. We went right through the middle of the slot between the headlands. Sure enough there was a lot of anti-aircraft fire going off over our heads, but down at our level, I did not see any.

Our target was Tarumizu, located on the east side of Kagashima Bay. We made a mistake by going down the right side right over the beach. There was a tremendous volume of very accurate fire from small arm machine

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2) Mission to Tarumizu

guns, and the air was full of those little white polls of smoke. Flying on Lt Brady's right wing I saw one of those hit his right engine and almost immediately he began to fall back.

At that time we were nearly to the target and he was supposed to pull us up in a line abreast. But the heavies had been there before us and the whole place was one big blanket of smoke. He was never able to get us into position and I remember seeing, just before entering the smoke, a yellow one man raft in the water. As we went into the smoke there were huge cinders floating all around us.

When we came out of the smoke there was a lot of confusion, and it seems to me instead of going out through the mouth of the gulf as we came in, he took us right down on the ground out to the ocean. By that time we had fallen behind the rest of the group, and I was on the horn with the lead plane. The left wing man (and I don't remember who it was) stayed back with us, and we crossed the shore and relaxed a little when we were out of range of all those guns.

The lead plane called and asked how Brady was doing, and I told him, "I think he is doing a little better. He has picked up about 50 feet and 5 miles an hour." He had never been able to get that right engine feathered, and I had no more than said that when I saw left engine start to windmill and he started down. I went down with him and moved over to his left side. I lowered my flaps to stay behind. There were huge swells running that day, I felt there was little chance they could ditch and be able to get out.

When they hit the water the nose section broke off, and those eight 50s flew way out into the ocean. His entire plane did a nose dive under the water, I thought that was the end. Then the plane backed up and popped out of the water. They all began scrambling out. I guess, because of the terrific impact, the fuselage had buckled enough to jam the door to their life raft, for they were unable to get it out. We called for air-sea rescue and began to circle.

The plane must have floated for five minutes or so, after it went down, we lost them. We circled as tight as we could but it is difficult to see anyone in that kind of sea. They broke out the sea marker and from then on we never lost sight of them.

(Continued on page 4)

TRAGEDY AT GREENVILLE

David Gunn (405th) (From "Target Tarakan". Copyright, used by permission.)

After serving as an instructor at Mather Field outside of Sacramento in November/December of 1943, I was ordered to report to Columbia, SC, for RTU in January, 1944. I sat around on the ground with several others, not getting even one hour for the whole month. Most of us were ordered to report to Greenville AAB in early February. We were quickly assigned to training crews and instructors and started our training schedule.

Saturdays were Post Parade day and, at Greenville, that meant there was a minimum altitude formation flyby just before the parade. On our first or second Saturday, we stood on the runway in parade formation and watched the flyby. There were four flights of three planes each, one flight following the other and just a little lower than the flight ahead.

The men in the planes were clearly visible to us standing in formation and some of them waved at the windows as they flew by. The last flight was so low that the prop wash threatened to blow the caps off of men near the line of flight.

The third flight was just at the end of the runway, perhaps a quarter mile beyond the ground formation, when the number two man lost his formation position, slid in, and chopped the tail section off his flight leader. The lead plane nosed up momentarily. Both wingmen of the fourth flight saw this and immediately pulled away. The two planes nosed down and hit the fourth flight leader on their way to the ground. The midair explosion pushed the turning wing men away, almost stalling them in their turns.

A fireball erupted at the impact point just beyond the runway. Groans and cries of dismay from the formation on the ground filled the air and emergency vehicles raced by us with sirens screaming. The parade formation was dismissed and we were ordered to return to the Ready Rooms.

None of the crewman in the new group had flown in B-25s before except the pilots. I had about 100 more hours in B-25s than the other pilot in our training crew. Everyone was in a state of shock. I gathered our training crew around me and told them, "What you saw was strictly a human error. Don't blame it on the plane."

None of the men in our crew chose to ask for a transfer but an unusually large number of men in that training class did. Too soon these men had seen portents of combat fatalities, eighteen men in a few brief moments.

The six of us hung together and eventually wound up with the 405th in July of 1944. My radio man, John Apetz, was transferred to the 345th BG shortly after we reached Nadzab. After I flew a few missions as copilot, the remaining five flew several missions together with various radio operators. We all eventually returned to the States in 1945.

(Continued from page 3) (Mission to Tarumizu)

We knew there were major Japanese fighter air fields within minutes flying distance, so I advised the gunners to be on the lookout for them. I felt certain they would show up. Sure enough one of the gunners called, "Boggies coming in". Then almost at once he advised, "They are P51s". Now we had fighter protection. There were other problems, the crew in the water had nothing but Mae West life vests but no life raft. I sent the co-pilot (I think this was his first mission) to the rear of the plane, instructing him to take the fire axe and cut our life raft out of its container. I had considered popping it out but was afraid it would strike the tail section. It was not a good idea as back at the base, I got a real chewing out.

It was not too long until a "Dumbo" (Catalina flying boat) showed up, after he had circled a few times to size up the situation he pulled out and made an approach but when he hit the water, he must have hit a big swell and bounced at least 50 to a 100 ft in the air. He tried twice and then gave up. For some reason (we must have been on different frequencies) we could never contact any of the planes that showed up to help. However, it seemed like an hour, but could not have been more than a few minutes when a "Jukebox" (B17 rescue) came up. He looked good with that huge lifeboat strapped on underneath. He circled and circled, but he did not drop the boat. I was upset with that.

Then a dark shadow under the water appeared and up came one of our submarines. We saw them take the crew on board. By that time, we were beginning to be concerned about fuel so we high-tailed it for Okinawa.

38th History

Larry Hickey advised that he has just finished revisions to one of the book projects, and hired a new full-time person to help speed up the publication of the books, including the 38th. He has made much progress on the projects during the past year, and will continue writing at least 8 hrs. per day until the books are finished. He is working as hard as he can to complete the task.

(Editor—Don Evans 22nd BGP has recently been in contact with Larry and has draft copies of the 22nd history which are available to any who might want one.)

The 38th Bomb Group

By Jack Cox 405th Sqdn

THE MIST-SHROUDED CURTAIN OF EVENING
STIRS MEMORIES THAT WILL NOT BE DENTED
OF DEAD MEN AND DYING AND GRIEVING,
OF THE PLACES AND MANNER THEY DIED,
OF JUNGLES AND OCEANS SO WIDE
JUNGLES AND OCEANS SO WIDE

OH, WHY WHEN THE YEARS ARE SO MANY
DOES THE STRIDENT CALL OF THE PAST
STILL ECHO SO LOUDLY THAT ANY
HURT IS STILL VIVID, AND HAST
POWER TO HURT AND TO LAST,
TO HURT AND TO LAST?

THE SONGS THAT WE SANG STILL ECHO
LIKE GHOSTS WITHOUT FORM DO THEY RING
AND IT SEEMS I HEAR A FAINT HELLO
FROM THE GRAVES THEY A MESSAGE WOULD BRING
OF SONGS WE GATHERED TO SING
SONGS WE GATHERED TO SING.

THERE WERE MITCHELLS LIGHTINGINGS & HAVOCS
BETTYS, MUSTANGS, AND ZEROES THERE TOO,
AND CORSAIRS AND GRUMANS LEFT TARMACS
FOR A ROUNDEVIOUS THERE IN THE BLUE
TO MEET AND TO DIE IN THE BLUE,
MEET AND TO DIE IN THE BLUE.

THE JUNGLES HAVE RECLAIMED OUR BASES;
THE OCEANS HAVE LONG CLAIMED OUR DEAD;
BUT THE MIST-SHROUDED EVENINGS BRING FACES
AND MEMORIES THAT TIME CANNOT SHED,
OF ALL OUR FRIENDS WHO ARE DEAD,
ALL OUR FRIENDS WHO ARE DEAD.

THE 38th BOMB GROUP'S DISBANDED;
THE ROAR OF ITS PLANES HEARD NO MORE.
THE LAST OF THE MITCHELLS HAVE LANDED,
THEY ARE PARKED ON ETERNITIES SHORE
PARKED ON ETERNITIES SHORE

IT'S A GHOST GROUP NOW IN FORMATION
WITH DEAD MEN WHO WORK THE CONTROLS
THEIR LIVES WERE THE PRICE OF A NATION
AND THEY SLEEP WHILE ETERNITY ROLLS
SLEEP WHILE ETERNITY ROLLS