

**02 AUGUST 1945** - Lieutenant Frank P. Hayes, pilot of "Playmate 61", departed Morotai at 0455 in search of a missing B-24 crew that was reported down in the vicinity of 00°30'N, 126°00'E. Lieutenant Hayes arrived at the search area at 0725. After searching for approximately two hours without success, Lieutenant Hayes contacted "Playmate 62" and they started for home base together. At 1301 they were contacted by "Varmint" who had located several rafts at 170° true bearing from Cape Flesko. At 1515 Lt Hayes located the rafts 20 miles ESE of the location given. The rafts' actual position was 00°04'S, 124°41'E. A single one man raft and five one man rafts tied together. Lieutenant Hayes landed his rescue ship at 1540 in heavy swells and effected the rescue of one man from his raft. He then taxied 2 miles NNE, through heavy seas to the group of five one man rafts and picked up seven men. At 1630 he taxied North to find smoother water for take-off. At 1800 Lieutenant Hayes made four unsuccessful take-off attempts. His rescue ship was overloaded with water from taxiing, and the sea was just too rough. His crew was frantically bailing water, but large waves crashing over the ship made the effort futile. At 1850 he made one final attempt and finally the Catalina became airborne, the navigator's window broken by waves during the run. The radar, radios, and instruments were damaged by water and were of no use on the return to base. Lieutenant Hayes landed at Morotai at 2145.

Rescued B-24 crew from the 307th Bomb Group, 372nd Bomb Squadron: (P) 1Lt Eugene W. Traendly, 0-130716, (CP) 2Lt Erwin I. Eckstein, 0-2027706, (B) 2Lt Frederick F. Taucher, 0-787360, (E) S/Sgt Harry J. Dugan, 33730231, (Asst. E) S/Sgt Dempsey D. Bankus, 37730231, (Photo) S/Sgt Chester M. Stanhope, 6936821, (Nose gunner) S/Sgt Warren D. Zimmerman, 33707929, (Tail gunner) S/Sgt Joe Daly, 39580975

**AIRCRAFT:** OA-10A 44-34043 **CALLSIGN:** "PLAYMATE 61" **CREW:** (P) 2Lt Frank P. Hayes, (CP) 2Lt Richard E. Costine, (N) 2Lt Gregersen, (E) Sgt Hubbard, (R) Sgt Miller, (Rad) Sgt Hagen, (ST) Sgt Meek

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