

1945

The following news item is quoted from a recent issue of the Washington, D. C. Star:

EXPLOITS OF B-24 'LONG RANGERS'
TO PROVIDE LIVELY POST WAR YARNS

HEADQUARTES 13TH AIRFORCE, Philippines.-Here's what Daddy did in the big war if he was in the "Long Rangers" group, one of the famed B-24 outfits of the Jungle Air Force.

He was a member of a team which:

Reached out from its South, Southwest Pacific and Netherlands East Indies bases to plaster the Japanese over an area of more than 8,500,000 square miles, considerably more than the area of the United States;

Struck the enemy on more than 700 days of its three years in action, usually flying two or more missions a day;

Earned two Distinguished Unit Citations, awarded by direction of the President, for cracking the tough Turk and Balikpapan bases;

Helped neutralize the bristling bases of Turk, Yap and Palau in less than four months to pave the way for the invasions of Guam, Saipan and the Caroline Islands;

Threw the Standard Operating Procedure book on B-24 Liberators out the window to put all four squadrons of the group in the air for 187 days with only one 24-hour period of inactivity in a six-month climax ending June 28, 1943-dropping 9800 tons of bombs in 37,000 air hours logged;

Held 500,000 At Bay: Harried and helped hold at bay some 500,000 bypassed Japs in the South and Southwest Pacific and the Dutch Indies after leading interference to enable other units to slip into position through the breaks it had made in the Jap line and pummel Japan's home islands;

Sunk 27,440 and damaged 112,525 tons of enemy shipping;

Chalked up some of the longest B-24 combat mission of the war – 13 hours to hit Yap, 17 ½ hours to hit Balikpapan;

Shot down or badly damage 482 Jap planes-sometimes as many as 25 per cent of enemy interceptive power on air missions; destroyed 170 on the ground.

Five 2600-mile Strikes: The five 2600-mile strikes against Japan's main source of oil, Balikpapan, Borneo, in conjunctions with its sister Liberator group of the 13th Air Force, the "bomber Barons" and some 5th Air Force Squadrons. The strikes knocked out the Pandansari and Edelneau refineries at Balikpapan and created the oil shortage that grounded Jap aircraft in the Philippines, the Indies, and at bases in China.

The first time a Jap naval fleet, consisting of three battleships, four cruisers and five destroyers, was placed under land-based bomber attack. The prize battlewogon Yamato and another battleship of the Kongo class were "rangerized" and badly damaged despite 16-inch fired at the Liberators in futile defense of this remnant of the Jap Imperial fleet.

The "Long Rangers"-the 307th Bombardment Group (Heavy) of the 13th Air Force, is commanded by Col. Clifford H. Rees, of Cynthiana, Ky., and Fort Worth, Texas.

The group flew its last combat strike of the war on Aug. 11, 1945 hitting the Laha airdrome area on Amboina Island. It was a "practiced" mission leading up to a full-fledged blast at the Jap homeland as soon as the outfit could move into position on Okinawa.