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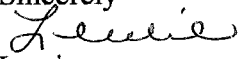
Sept. 30,2010

Mr. Patrick Ranfranz  
1473 21 ½ St.  
Cameron, WI 54822

Dear Pat:

Recently while trying to clean out my cellar I found some old 307<sup>th</sup> Newsletters.  
I went thru them and found some articles that I thought you might like.  
The 93-2 Newsletter has an article about the July 15,1944 mission. I don't know if you  
have a copy of this article. I was on that mission . It was our last mission.  
Story of our Tail gunner of the July 15 mission  
Morotai Air Raids  
Rabaul's Military Prisoners

Sincerely

  
Lewie

The Nominating Committee of Ike Ayala (714-891-4544), Jim McCloskey (213-625-8405), and Wes Gray (313-241-4567) are looking for any of you 307th members who would be willing to serve as one of the officers of the 307th Bomb Group Association. If you are interested, please contact one of them.

Ken Meyers  
President

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NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP

The following letter was sent to me by Ira Anderson. Can any of you 307th members throw some light on a GENE D. BIRDWELL? I have no record of him in any of my correspondence.

"Dear Sir,

I noted the announcement in the Aug. 93 DAV Magazine regarding the 370th Sqdn, 307th Bomb Group. I was a pilot in that group in 43-44.

I have been trying to locate a crew-member since the war. Maybe you will hear from him as a result of that notice, in which case I'd appreciate his address or having my address given to him so we can meet or correspond.

His name is GENE D. BIRDWELL. He and the crew were shot down in early 44 in the SOPAC. He apparently survived and returned to the U.S. at the end of WWII. (I was ill and not with the crew at that time.)

Your assistance will be appreciated. I would not be able to attend a reunion due to poor physical health,

Thank you,  
James R. Gibbs  
5100 John D. Ryan Blvd.  
Apt. 2801  
San Antonio, Tx 78245"

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The following letter was received from Louis Vogel.

"Re: Richard D. Wiley, 371st - Letter sent to Mr. Thomas Wiley from William Blair. Article appears in Newsletter 93-1 Mission July 15, 1944, Target Yap, led by Capt. F. G. Kaestner, 424th Bomb Sq. Copies from diary kept by L.L. Vogel, Co-Pilot, Kaestner's Crew.

July 15, 1944 - Day mission, the target for today was West Yap Town. We got off at 550 with a bomb load of 14/250 Lb demols. Circled the field once and left on course for Sorol Island, the weather was bad all the way up as we encountered two fronts. Sorol was closed in and we rendezvoused 15 miles S.E. of Sorol. We left on course for Yap 20 minutes late. We hit weather again but managed to keep the formation together. Upon reaching the target we hit fighters as usual. Our bombs hit the target after dodging some towering Q's. One B-24 lagged behind and in attempt to catch the formation was picked off by a Jap fighter causing his plane to go out of control and crash into another B-24. Both planes burst into flames. Engines, wings and bodies flew through the air due to the impact. The AA over the target was intense and heavy but innacurate. The fighters were eager on our ship as we lead the group. Three ships lost engines, two of which made water landings. We got hit in #1 engine but did not lose it. We also got hits in fuselage, tail section and engine nacelles. The weather back was good with the exception of a few towering Q's. The bombs were rated excellent knocking out the west section of town and barracks area. We logged 12 hours, 30 minutes. We picked up over 100 holes. Josephine was junked, she did her part. It saw our crew through many missions.

Louis Vogel"

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S/Sgt. Jack Ryder Tail-Gunner on Capt. Eugene Link's crew, his story about the raid to Yap Island on July 15, 1944

Our 50th mission was a dangerous daylight raid over Yap Island with no fighter escort. The weather was stormy, and the formation had to breakup temporarily. The Japanese were flying their newest aircraft the "Tojo". Ryder explained that because of normal prop wash the B-24's do not fly close or wing-tip-to-wing tip. From the ground it would look like this but actually the formation was set up in step-like fashion-each plane flying a little above the other.

I spotted a Japanese plane turning toward us and I hollered, "Pilot from Tail--Up!" The pilot pulled up and the airplane rose sharply in an evasive maneuver to avoid striking two Liberators flying on a collision course below us. I could see one B-24 steering to the right and another one was on my right, which had been shot full of holes along the fuselage. The pilot was apparently dead or unconscious and the plane veered and tipped over and slammed into the one on the left. We were about 20 to 25,000 feet and if we had not pulled up quickly we would have gone down tangled with the two planes as they circled down, leveled off and hit the water about 20 feet apart. Two smoke piles. We had forty planes in our attack on Yap Island which was out of range for our P-40 escort. Arriving at Yap we dropped incendiary bomb's to mark the area. The incendiaries would hit the water and blink and some hit land causing fires, which lit up the area for our bombers. At this time, we were flying silvery aluminum planes, which were easy to spot. Our plane was the lead plane. The bombs were released, and we returned to base.

This is Ryder's account of the raid as told to the Author of a local book recently published. I was the nose gunner on the crew, and the only thing that I can remember is seeing the two planes going down after they collided

Most of the missions that we went on, the Japanese Fighter planes that were waiting to attack us, usually made only two or three passes at us. By the time we were headed away from the target, we were beyond their range, and they were no longer able to stay with us and attack us. On this mission they were using a different plane that had more armament to protect them and also had a longer range, so they were able stay with us longer, resulting in more attacks than in the previous missions.

This was our 50th and last mission that we flew. It was a twelve hour mission.

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