

Retyped from microfilm:

Pages 1 – 15, 21, 28, and 30 by Joan D. Stewart

Cover, Pages 16 – 29 by Sparky Corradina

HISTORICAL DATA

Narrative Summary

Documents

of

40TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP

58th Bombardment Wing

XXI Bomber Command

Twentieth Air Force

Period: 1 May thru 31 May 1945

SECRET

GROUP HISTORY

1 May thru 31 May 1945

After a month's respite from combat activity the crews of the 40th went back to work, adding their not inconsiderable effort to that of the other groups of the 58th Wing and the other Wings of the XI Bomber Command. During May the Group participated in eight combat missions to the Japanese mainland – a record for the 40th; but one that from all indications would not stand for very long. The cost was high: 43 men missing, four wounded, and three injured after bailing out over Iwo Jima. The 44th Squadron alone lost three crews.

May brought the end of the war in Europe and V-E Day, an occasion which passed without celebration or ceremony here in the Marianas. Despite repeated successes against the Japs on land, sea and in the air the end of the war in the Pacific was by no means in sight. However, with V-E Day came the announcement of the "Point System", and this was the subject of much discussion despite the fact that, for the present, personnel in B-29 outfits are not affected. It is of interest to note that 23.5% of all personnel in the Group had scores of 85 or more points. (According to the Group Statistical Officer this was the highest percentage of any group in the XXI Bomber Command.) Also of interest, though comparisons are not available, is the fact that 52% of the officers in the Group expressed a preference to get out of the Army as soon as possible.

Construction work in the Group area continued during May. Although the briefing building was complete, except for interior decorations, plans were being made to move the map and target sections (located in the back of the building) into a Quonset hut so that more crews could be accommodated. Enlargement of the building was anticipated; word had been received that groups would soon be composed of four squadrons again.

Enlisted men and officers continued to share the large consolidated Mess Hall during May. The Officer's Mess was scheduled for use early in June. The food served was definitely an improvement over that to which the Group had become accustomed in India. Such items as fresh butter, corn-on-the-cob, pork chops, celery and ice cream helped account for the fact that the majority of the men were gaining back weight lost in India.

Mosquitoes were few and the genus Anopheles absent altogether. Mosquito nets, which for the past year had been an essential accessory to every bed, were discarded.

The weather at Tinian was warm; frequently hot, in the middle of the day but what with the constant trade wind from the east and cool nights everyone was well satisfied with the climate. After a summer in Behar Province any change would have been welcome.

Water for bathing continued to present a problem during the first half of the month. However, by the end of May the supply was increased due to better facilities for haling and pumping the water into the six large tans on the hill to the east of the Group area.

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Laundry was another problem which many of the men solved by constructing windmill washing machines. By the end of the month, however, officers could send 15 items to a Group Laundry (operated by Korean and Okinawan internees) every 10 or 12 days and the enlisted men could get nine pieces done at the Q.H. laundry ever week or 10 days.

Swimming and shows every night continued to be the only entertainment available other than the usual card games. Aside from the nightly picture shows, however, the Group was treated to almost as many 'live' productions in May as had played Chakulia in a year. In addition to the 313th Wing band, a Seabee show, and a USO show, there was "The Man Who Came To Dinner" with Moss Hart playing the role of Sheridan Whiteside, an all Navy show featuring Claude Thornhill, Dennis Day, Jackie Cooper and others, and an all Marine show with a cast of 30 which featured Dick Jurgens, the popular orchestra leader, and a 19 piece band. This last production in particular received high acclaim as an outstanding example of entertainment despite the fact that not a single girl adorned the cast. (Photos 1 thru 6)

During May morale remained high for the majority of ground personnel but fell off considerably so far as combat crews were concerned. This was due primarily to the realization, substantiated by General Ramey in a talk to all of the crews, that completing 35 missions was no guarantee of getting to go home. The loss of three crews within a few days dispelled optimism to a considerable degree and there was a strong feeling, General Ramey's remarks notwithstanding, that no one was working hard to obtain replacements. Most combat crew members had been overseas almost a year and a half, and many had more than 500 hours of combat and operational time. They felt that they had taken their share of chances and done their share of the job.

* * * * *

Of necessity, perhaps, operating procedure at Tinian under the XXI Bomber Command proved to be very different in many respect from operating procedure in India under the XX Bomber Command. The first and most obvious change noted concerned mission preparation. On 29 April it became known that the Group might participate in its first mission from Tinian on the following night. At 1700 on 30 April word was received from the 35th Wing that there would be no mission that night, but possibly on 3 May instead. On 3 May briefing was scheduled for midnight but late that afternoon Group Operations was notified of a 24 hour delay. At approximately 1600 on 4 May the target was changed. Only minor alterations were made after that, and briefing for the first mission was held at midnight on that date.

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

With subsequent missions it became apparent that this sort of thing was practically SOP and changes could be expected up to within a few hours of take off.

Between 0324K and 0414K (all times given henceforth will be local) on 5 May, in accordance with 58th Wing Field Order #2, dated 4 May, the 40th Group dispatched 31 aircraft to attack the Hiro Naval Aircraft Company at Kure, Honshu, Japan.

A total of 27 planes bombed the primary target, one bombed a target of opportunity and three were forced to jettison their loads due to mechanical difficulties. The average bombing altitude was 18,500 feet and visual bombing was accomplished with excellent results observed. A total of 210 K-64 1000 lb bombs were dropped at the primary target.

No attacks by enemy aircraft were reported, but five of our planes sustained minor damage from varicolored flak which ranged from moderate to intense and accurate to inaccurate.

Twenty-seven planes returned directly to base and four landed at Iwo Jima for gas or minor repairs, continuing back to Tinian the next day.

Bombing accuracy for the 40th Group as a whole was excellent - - 54% of the bombs fell within 1000 feet of the aiming point. The 25th Squadron formation had 81% within 1000 feet and 97% within 2000 feet. The 44th Squadron formation's bombs all fell between 1000 and 2000 feet from the aiming point. The 45th put 72% within 1000 feet and 97% within 2000 feet.

According to the official damage assessment (1) every building in the northern three-fourths of the plant was either damaged or destroyed. Roof area affected totaled 779000 square feet or 71.5% of the total plant roof area.

Take off for the next mission was originally scheduled for the night of 7 - 8 May but to no one's surprise the mission was postponed 24 hours. On 8 May - VE Day - briefing was again scheduled and again the Group was notified of a 24 hour delay. Finally, at 2400 on 9 May briefing was held for a mission to the Oshima Naval Oil Storage target off the southwestern coast of Honshu, Japan.

On 10 May, from 0300 to 0340, 31 aircraft were airborne from West Field. There were no ground aborts and no early returns. Twenty-three planes bombed the primary target visually with good to excellent observed results, one dropped on a target of opportunity (Sukomo Seaplane Base) and seven released early on the number three plane in the first formation.

(1) C.I.U. XXI Bomber Command Damage Assessment Report No 61, dated 10 May 45.

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

(This was considered to be personal error. Only part of the bombs left two of these planes; the remainder were dropped on the primary target.)

Eight enemy aircraft were observed in the target area and two of our planes opened fire on Micks which did not press their attacks and were not observed to fire. There were no claims. One of our planes sustained minor damage from flak which in general was considered meager to moderate and inaccurate.

Two planes landed at Iwo Jima enroute back, one due to fuel transfer failure and the other due to fuel running low. There were no planes lost and no personnel casualties.

Of the 388 500 lb Composition B bombs released at the primary target, only those from one formation could be plotted. The remainder entered the smoke which obscured almost all of the target area. Of these bombs in the pattern which could be calculated, 88% fell within 1000 feet of the aiming point and 100% fell within 2000 feet.

According to post strike photos (2) 74% of the pre-strike capacity of this installation was destroyed or damaged and 90% of the total building roof space was destroyed.

On 13 May at 2230 36 crews were briefed for a daylight incendiary attack on Nagoya, Jap an. Take offs began at 0122 (14 May) and 34 B-29's were airborne in 40 minutes with one additional plane taking off 22 minutes later. There were two early returns. A total of 32 planes bombed the primary target with unobserved to excellent results obser ved. These planes dropped 788 E-46 500 lb incendiary bombs on Nagoya from an average altitude of 18,200 feet. Haze and, later, smoke which billowed to 16000 feet obscured the target for some of our planes necessitating bombing by radar.

Enemy aircraft opposition was considered surprisingly weak. Although 15 attacks were reported only a few were pressed home and only one of our planes sustained minor damage from an attack. 40th Group B-29's claimed two enemy aircraft (one Zeke and one Tony) destroyed. Several instances of air to air bombing were reported but all were ineffective.

Meager and inaccurate antiaircraft fire was encountered at the IP. At the primary target flak was meager to moderate and generally inaccurate. There were indications of gr ound to air rockets being employed.

Of 35 planes airborne, 29 returned safely to base and five landed at Iwo Jima. A 25th Squadron plane, #492, commanded by 1st Lt. William P. Donelan was missing. No communications were received from this plane.

(2) C.I.U. XXI Bomber Command Damage Assessment Report No 72, dated 20 May 45

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

After take off and none of the returning crews reported having seen it at any time. Search planes sent out for several days following the mission. All reports negative results.

However, on 27 May, 2nd Lt Dale E. Ellis, the co-pilot, was picked up by a destroyer At 23°23'N - 143°48'E, 13 days after parachuting into the ocean. He was taken to Iwo suffering from salt water ulcers, sunburn, and malnutrition.

Upon his return to Tinian in June, Lt Ellis was interrogated (3). It was learned that approximately two hours after take off, #2 propeller ran away and could not be feathered. Almost immediately the engine caught fire and despite the fact that bombs were jettisoned and power increased in the other three engines altitude could not be held. Due to the rough sea and the darkness ditching was not considered advisable. Ellis followed the bombardier out of the plane at an altitude of 18,000 feet and believes that he saw four chutes leave the plane after his own had opened. This was his last glimpse of any other member of the crew. When he was about half way to the water the plane suddenly turned to the left, as if the controls had been released, and dived into the ocean exploding with flames shooting 50 to 60 feet into the air. Although two other B-29's were passing by at the time, there was no indication that the crash had been observed.

Exhibiting coolness and courage, Ellis, who could not swim, inflated his seat type life raft, checked his equipment, and settled down to wait. During the 13 days following he saw four strike missions fly to the Japanese mainland and return. Although he used his mirror repeatedly there was at no time any indication that the flashes were seen.

Finally, on 27 May, he managed to attract the attention of a PBY which directed a destroyer to him. He was taken to Iwo and hospitalized then, after regaining the use of his legs, returned to Tinian on 7 June.

Damage resulting from the mission of 14 May mounted to 37,890,000 square feet or 3.15 square miles (4). Due to lack of reconnaissance photography between this and the following attack on Nagoya exact separation of damage from the two missions was impossible necessitating arbitrary separation.

At 1300 hours on 16 May 34 crews were briefed for an incendiary night mission to Nagoya, the second in three days. Take offs began at 2005, 32 planes being airborne in 62 minutes. There were two early returns.

- (3) Bail Out Report, Dale E. Ellis, 2nd Lt, Air Corps, dated 11 June 45 (Incl. 1)
- (4) G.I.U. XXI Bomber Command Damage Assessment Report No. 19, dated 25 May 45

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Just prior to bombs away B-29 #5271, piloted by Major D. W. Roberts (45th Squadron) with Lt Col Oscar R. Schaaf, Deputy Group Commander, flying as co-pilot, developed engine trouble. The propeller could not be feathered and a few minutes later, began to run away resulting in excessive vibration to the aircraft. However, the vibration decreased and the propeller windmilled smoothly until it came off 45 minutes away from Iwo cutting the majority of the control cables. Because the plane could be controlled only to a limited degree making a landing was out of the question. The entire crew bailed out over Iwo (Photos (1 thru 16)). All landed safely except Major Roberts, who suffered a cracked vertebra, and the bombardier and flight engineer who sustained bruises and strained muscles (5). Back at Tinian several reports were received that Roberts and ditched before word finally came that the entire crew was safe.

According to the official damage assessment (6) 6,200,000 square feet, or .22 square mile of Hamamatsu were burned out a result of this mission. This brought the total damage to Hamamatsu to .53 square miles, or 12.1% of the entire city.

Briefing for XXI Bomber Command Mission No. 161 was held at 1400 on 23 May. This was to be a night incendiary attack on Tokyo by all wings of the Bomber Command.

Of the 33 planes schedule 32 were airborne starting at 2005 hours. One plane was forced to jettison and return to base due to a stuck prop governor.

Of the remaining 31 aircraft 30 dropped 1121 E-46 500 lb incendiary clusters and 36 E-17 500 lb incendiary clusters on the primary target from an average altitude of 10800 feet. The majority bombed by radar due primarily to dense black smoke rising as high as 16000 feet in the air. Thermal currents caused by the fires were reported to be severe.

Fighter opposition was nil to weak although crews reported definite indications of air to air bombing. Again there were reports of search lights on enemy aircraft.

Heavy anti-aircraft fire in the target area was reported as nil to moderate and inaccurate to accurate. Light flak was nil to intense, and inaccurate. From 75 to 100 searchlights were seen in the target area with concentrations of lights in the northern and western parts of the city. Some were apparently radar controlled and the use of "trope" was considered effective.

The observations and impressions of the crew members followed somewhat the same pattern as on the night attack on Nagoya several days ago. However, in contrast to the Nagoya mission, weather conditions were

(5) 45th Squadron History, May 1945 (Incl 2)

(6) C.I.U XXI Bomber Command Damage Assessment Report No 70, dated 27 May 45

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

better in the target area with CAVU to 1/10 cloud coverage conditions existing during the time of attack. In addition the moon furnished partial visibility which enabled crews to see things more clearly from the IP to the target. Scattered fires from bombs, gun flashes, tracer fire from automatic weapons and intense searchlight activity all fused together to make the target area a myriad conglomeration of flight and reflections. A heavy smoke pall hung over the city and target area which afforded protection from searchlights but also made observations over the target impossible (7).”

One plane, due to engine failure, bombed a target of opportunity (Sagara, 34°4L'N - 138°12'E) with unobserved results.

Returning from Japan three planes landed at Iwo for fuel. Due to failure of the fuel transfer system followed by an explosion in #3 engine, the entire crew of a 25th Squadron airplane (#3498), piloted by Lt. Otto S. Kerstner, bailed out about 100 miles north of Tinian (8). All crew members, with the exception of Cpl Robert V. Boalton, left gunner, were picked up by the US Sea Plane Tender Invincible about six hours after bailout (Photos 17 thru 20). Cpl Boalton is still missing.

Adequate recon photos were not obtained between this and the next Tokyo mission so no exact damage assessment was possible.

On the afternoon of 25 May briefing was held for our second night mission to Tokyo. This, too, was to be a low altitude attack by the entire Bomber Command.

Take offs began at 01:15 and 33 aircraft were airborne in one hour and 33 minutes. There was only one early return; a 40th Squadron airplane developed an oil leak, bombs were jettisoned in the ocean and the plane returned to base.

Four 40th Group planes had been assigned the task of marking the aiming point for the main force to follow. One of these pathfinders did not return (9). The following account (10) is descriptive of conditions over the target.

- (7) 40th Bomb Group Antiaircraft report, Mission No 181
- (8) See 25th Squadron History for May 1945 (Incl 3)
- (9) See 44th Squadron History for May (Incl 4)
- (10) 40th Group Antiaircraft Report, Mission No 183, date 26 May 45

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

“Approaching the target on a heading of 295° (at 8000 feet) the (pathfinder) aircraft were first illuminated by search light which were located on the east shore of Tokyo Bay. They were already committed to their bomb run when illumination occurred. The first plane was picked up about four (4) minutes before bombs away by two beams after about three seconds search. “Rope” was immediately dispensed and the lights fell off the plane. Two minutes later 50 – 75 beams snapped on around the northern part of the Bay and the eastern part of the City, but none of the beams ever located the plane. Meager and inaccurate black bursts of heavy flak were encountered by this aircraft just prior to bombs away. However, other aircraft were observed to be coned and receiving moderate to intense heavy antiaircraft fire. It was the opinion of the crew of the first aircraft that the antiaircraft fire was deliberately held at first in order to afford enemy fighters an opportunity to make attacks. Much air-to-air tracer fire was seen just before reaching the IP and half was across the Bay.

“The second pathfinder aircraft reported definite indications of radar controlled search lights about seven minutes before bombs away, while crossing the peninsula to the IP. The lights, numbering approximately 25, snapped on and were immediately on the aircraft without searching. “Rope” was dispensed and momentary respite was gained. However on starting across the Bay a great number of lights picked the plane up and coned it. Heavy antiaircraft immediately began and continued until bombs away. Fire was moderate and accurate. The aircraft was rocked heavily and also struck. In addition this aircraft encountered intense and accurate automatic weapons fire a few seconds before bombs away and sustained major damage from medium projectiles bursting on impact. The automatic weapons fire continued for approximately 30 seconds after breakaway.

“The third pathfinder aircraft was illuminated by searchlights about 10 miles before reaching the IP. Some of the beams were on “target” when they came on, while others searched. At least 20 lights coned the aircraft all the way into the target and continued on them for about four minutes after bomb release. On being coned the pilot stated that he changed prop itch, threw out “Rope” and took evasive action, but the beams could not be shaken. Intense and accurate heavy and automatic weapons gun fire was encountered about two minutes before bombs away which resulted in the aircraft being rocked violently and sustaining major damage from numerous fragments.

“All three pathfinder crews thought the heavy gun fire to be continuous pointed and the automatic weapons fire to be barrage type.

“Breakaway was to the right.

“Blackout was considered excellent. No barrage balloons were reported. All observations and encounters of antiaircraft fire were confined to the immediate target area. No activity from picket boats was reported.

“The main force attacked the target (from an average altitude of 9600 feet) on an axis of attack varying from 65° to 92°. Thirteen

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

aircraft of the main force were struck by either heavy antiaircraft fire, automatic weapons fire, or a combination of both. Four sustained major damage and nine sustained minor damage.

“The majority of crews reported that antiaircraft fire was not encountered until their aircraft were illuminated and coned by search lights.

“Search light activity was first encountered at a point on the approach course just south of the Tachikawa – Hachioji area. Evaluating all reports the following description of search light employment is given:

“The search lights for the outer defense of Tokyo for attacks from the west are positioned at Tachikawa, Hachioji, and on top of the last ridge of hills south of Tachikawa before entering the plain before Tokyo. From the outer boundary, formed by this general line, into the target lights are staggered in rings towards the city area. The defense system is conventional with one series of lights carrying aircraft to the next series, then going off in order to pick up the next aircraft penetrating the defenses.

“On this mission crews reported observing a bright green light or glow on the ground at the outer ring of lights below Tachikawa. The light was so bright that it hurt the eyes to look at it. Some pilots stated that it flooded the sky with light at an altitude of 10000feet, enough light in fact to see other B-29's in the area. The green glow remained bright for about 10-15 seconds, then died out. While the light was at its brightest search light beams immediately located the aircraft, influencing the crews to believe that visual contact was made by the enemy while the sky was so bright. The origin of such a light is unknown, but it is possible that the enemy has resorted to a method of this type, particularly when it is considered how difficult it must be for him to effectively employ radar control with “Rope” being dispensed, RCM jamming his frequencies, and a larger number of planes in the area simultaneously.

“The majority of aircraft for the main force were picked up and coned by the outer ring of lights, although some rear planes succeeded in avoiding lights entirely while in the target area. Continuous pointed heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered by aircraft that were coned about 30 seconds after coning. This time lag was about right since visual tracking requires about 20 seconds for the director to present smooth data to the guns, plus of course, the time of fusing of the shell. Heavy antiaircraft fire was generally accurate and moderate to intense. It is significant to mention that most of the ships that were not coned reported heavy fire as nil to meager.

“Intense automatic weapons fire was encountered by all of the main force. Accuracy once again seemed to be regulated by whether the aircraft were coned by search lights or not. Some of the automatic weapons fire was time fused while, and burst white, most of it streamed by in tracers, arcing over and burning out. A great portion of the tracers were reaching the altitude of the aircraft.

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Other groups taking off from Tinian that night appeared to be having difficulties. From the 40th Group area occasional flashes could be seen in the sky as bombs were jettisoned or planes crashed on take off (no one could be sure which was happening). Eyes were constantly turning apprehensively to the east and north to the glows in the sky. Afterward it was learned that, in addition to those planes which jettisoned their loads immediately after take off, a B-29 at North Field had gone off the end of the runway and burned, and the crew of a 462nd Group airplane had bailed out over the island, fortunately without loss of life in either case. Later that night a 444th Group plane aborting from the mission crashed just short of West Field resulting in the death or serious injury of all on board.

Of the 30 planes to reach the Jap mainland 29 released 767 E-17 500 lb incendiary clusters and 919 M-14 100 lb incendiaries at the primary target. Bombing was accomplished from an average altitude of 13000 feet through 9/10 undercast. Only the pathfinders, which went in between 8000 and 9000 feet, were able to bomb visually. One plane bombed a target of opportunity (Yatsuzaka) due to engine failure at the IP.

No attacks on our aircraft were reported. However there were several reports of enemy aircraft equipped with powerful searchlights which successfully coned our planes. One crew reported seeing three possible rocket type aircraft flying at about 8000 feet. One was seen to crash into the ground and the other two were still flying when last seen. Their speed at least equaled that of a B-29.

Antiaircraft fire over the target ranged from moderate and inaccurate for the pathfinder planes to meager and inaccurate for the main force. It was believed that antiaircraft fire was handicapped by cloud layers and smoke which rendered the numerous searchlights ineffective. A ground to air rocket was reported at the IP. One plane was slightly damaged by flak.

All of our aircraft returned safely to base, one landing at Iwo enroute.

At 2400 hours on 18 May briefing was held for a daylight mission to the Tachikawa Aircraft Plant, Honshu, Japan. Twenty-four planes took off starting at 0346 (19 May); there were no ground aborts and no early returns.

Due to 10/10 weather at the primary target it was necessary to comb the primary radar target, Hamamatsu City. Twenty-three of our planes dropped 436 500 lb M-64 composition B Bombs through 10/10 cloud cover at Hamamatsu from an altitude of 18500 feet. The remaining plane bombed Kofu urban area visually with unobserved results. Neither flak nor enemy aircraft opposition was encountered.

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

“Heavy gun fire and automatic weapons fire was particularly intense at point of bombs away. Notwithstanding the fact that the greatest concentration of weapons are close in to the city, it is very probably the predicted concentration or barrage fire was being employed at the bomb release point. Such was the impression of the crews.

“Breakaway was to the right with departure course between Chiba and Kisarazu Airfield on the eastern peninsula of Tokyo Bay. With CAVU weather conditions, coupled with the fact that little smoke was coming from target fires, search lights were able to continue their tracking well across Tokyo Bay. A small number of search light beams (10 – 20) were soon in operation at Chiba aimlessly searching, but none succeeded in locating our aircraft. Gun flashes were observed from Chiba and Kisarazu Airfield, but no bursts were encountered.”

A total of 11 enemy aircraft were sighted on this mission and two of the 11 made attacks on our planes. Numerous “balls of fire” were reported; the following account is quoted from the 45th Group Fighter Reaction Report, Mission 183, dated 27 May 45.

“Balls of Fire” reports continue to be received at interrogation. By consolidating it appears that at least twenty “balls” were seen by planes of this Group from the IP to the target area with the predominant majority in the target area. The “balls” were seen from 1438Z to 1532Z with the majority around 1447Z. Some were described as following B-29’s or headed in the direction of other B-29’s while others were described as being stationary about ten seconds and then slowly falling to the earth. One B-29 stated the “ball” came up from the ground but the majority agreed that it would suddenly appear in the sky as if it were shot up by guns or rockets or launched from the air. All agreed that the “ball” had a constant glow which varied in intensity and that the glow continued through its descent in the direction of the B-29. As it came closer the “ball” became larger and it came towards the B-29 from nine o’clock. At 400 yards the left gunner began firing and the “ball” then disintegrated into three separate pieces and was seen to fall into Tokyo Bay. The airplane commander saw most of this and is of the opinion that this “ball” was launched from the air and was rocket propelled. At 1446Z, aircraft #980 saw a “ball” in the target area approach from four o’clock low. The left gunner fired at seven to seven -thirty o’clock and the “ball” was seen to explode at 800 – 1000 yards away and fall in many pieces to the ground. The approach of the “ball” from the right was so low that the tail gunner could not fire but as the “ball” started its attack from seven o’clock the left gunner was able to fire. The speed of the “ball” was described as fast.”

A careful examination by higher headquarters of all such reports revealed the horrifying possibility that some of the balls of fire were actually burning B -29’s. However this does not account for all the sightings and the nature of the enemy fire balls is still not known.

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Thirty of our planes are known to have bombed ten primary targets with observed results ranging from excellent to good to unobserved. 40 strike photographs were obtained.

In addition to one of the pathfinder planes another 44th Squadron airplane (piloted by Captain A. C. Papon) which was in the main force is missing. Nothing is known as to the fate of these two crews.

Area damage as a result of this and the preceding mission totaled 22.1 square miles or 20% of the entire city area. The sum total of all damage up to and including this mission amounted to 56.3 square miles, 50.8% of the total city area (11).

Briefing for the last mission of the month was held at 0030 on 29 May and 31 planes took off starting at 0337 for a daylight incendiary attack on Yokohama. With a single exception all planes bombed the primary target. The average bombing altitude was 18,700 feet and 965 E-46 500 lb incendiary clusters were unloaded on Yokohama, the majority by visual means.

Fighter opposition was weak although our only loss was due to an enemy fighter. All three of our formations reported mean to moderate, and accurate flak; 10 of our aircraft sustained minor damage.

Weather at the target ranged from CAVU to 3/10 cloud cover. Smoke was rising to 16000 feet and so covered the target area that bomb impacts could not be plotted on the strike photos.

One plane and crew were lost on this mission. Approaching the IP a Mick was seen about a mile ahead of our 12 plane formation and at a slightly higher altitude. Ignoring the two other formations beneath it the Mick approached our formation in a long, shallow dive. From this point on, accounts of the attack vary widely. Some crew members state that the Mick was firing as it came in, others are equally certain it didn't fire a single round. Some witnesses state that the Mick, starting an attack on the lead B-29, was hit in the starboard engine by fire from #542 which was on the extreme left hand side of the formation. This version claims that smoke and flame were visible coming from the starboard engine of the Mick while it was still 100 yards away, that the right wing suddenly dropped and the enemy plane veered away from the lead B-29, crashing into #894 (Lt M. R. Clark, airplane commander) which was flying #3 position in the lead element. Other crew members stated definitely that the Mick was not burning before impact. Crew members were about equally divided on the question as to whether impact occurred between #1 and #2 engines or between #3 and #4. An explosion occurred on contact, the fighter disintegrated and

(21) C.I.U. XXI Bomber Command Damage Assessment Report No. 81, dated 7 June 45

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

either the left or the right wing of #894 was sheered off. Only three parachutes were seen coming from the aft part of the stricken plane before it crashed in the mountains below (12). Captain Bruce L. Miller in his Fighter Reaction Report, stated: "Although there is a definite possibility that the ramming was deliberate there is no conclusive evidence to support this contention and it is at least equally likely that the Mick was damaged and out of control at the time of the crash."

With the exception of #894 all of our aircraft returned safely to base.

Post strike photos showed excellent bombing results from this mission. The principle portion of the city was virtually destroyed. Damage from this mission totaled 6.9 square miles, representing 34% of the built-up portion of the city. Total damage was raised to 8.9 square miles representing 44% of the built-up portion of Yokohama (13).

* * * * *

By the end of May morale in the 40th Group could not be considered high. Primarily the reason for this appeared to be the matter of rotation. With the announcement of the "Point System" morale was raised; here was something definite and the 40th Group was a high scoring outfit. With the announcement that the system did not, for the present, apply to B-29 personnel, morale went down again. Similarly the combat crews all had their sights on 35 missions, ignoring or shrugging aside the qualifying work "eligible." Thus when General Ramey stated that some crews would probably have to fly more than 35 missions, and that the rotation plan might not be functioning according to schedule until December of this year (all due to the tremendous expansion of the B-29 program) morals went very low. Knowledge of the fact that at least some of the crews in the 73rd Wing were going back to the States after completing 30 missions did not help matters.

One of the greatest contributing factors was rumor. In this respect at least the General's talk was appreciated. He put all of the facts before the crews and if they still weren't sure exactly where they stood they at least knew why and they knew what the probabilities were. However, there was still the feeling among personnel that they were not getting all the facts, that complete information, particularly in regard to rotation, was not being divulged to every one as it became known.

Another important morale factor is the present lack of esprit de corps in the 40th, a condition that not only results from low morale,

(12) See 44th Squadron History for May 1945 (Incl 4)

(13) C.I.U. XXI Bomber Command Flash Report No 254, dated 1 June 1945

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

but also contributes to it. Reasons for the absence of group pride are not always obvious and most of them could not be discussed without adequate documentation. However, one of the most important reasons for this condition is the present system of organization by which the squadrons have all but lost their identity. Under the 58th Wing the Group, for all operational purposes, has become an oversized squadron and the Wing has assumed many of the responsibilities that formally belonged to the Group. Due to the inherent distaste with which most subordinate units regard higher headquarters, the close knit loyalty and pride usually found in a squadron can only with difficulty be transformed to the group,

There are, of course, other morale factors, but with the exception of the enlisted man's resentment of officer privileges such as liquor rations and laundry service no accurate analysis can be made without conducting a survey.

One final observation remains. The majority of the men in the 40th appear to have lost sight of the reason for their being here. There is the subconscious feeling among them that they are working for a boss for a certain length of time (the shorter the better) or for a certain number of missions, at the end of which time they will be permitted to return home. Almost every thought is subordinate to the desire to go home.

There can be little criticism of the individual for feeling this way, and there is no denying that this condition exists to a greater or less extent throughout the Air Forces as well as in other branches of the service. Nevertheless, as a moral factor in the 40th Group this lack of perspective must be acknowledged.

Additional photographs accompanying this installment of the History show the Group area (Photos 21, 22) and the Group Operations staff (photo 23). All photos are fully identified and dated on the backs of the prints.

F. G. WOOD JR
Captain, Air Corps
Historical Officer

* * * * *

ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

1. The following is a report of activity during the month of May 1945 with which the Adjutant and Personnel Sections are concerned.

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

2. The Unit Personnel Section

a. In compliance with paragraph 4, Regulation 37-1, Headquarters 58th Bombardment Wing, dated 1 May 1945, subject: "Personnel Management," a Unit Personnel Section was organized 15 May 1945.

b. The section was headed by Captain Wallace F. Snow, 0 562 089, AG, Assistant Group, Adjutant and 2nd Lt. Donald E. Lageson, 0 699 941, AC, Group Personal Affairs Officer. The position of Personnel Sgt Major was filled by T Sgt Al S. Cohen, 17 038 714. The aforementioned personnel and one (1) S Sgt – 275, one (1) Sgt. – 405, one (1) S Sgt 975 (Temporary), and one (1) S Sgt – 502 make up the Headquarters contribution of personnel to the section.

c. Each of the three squadrons contributed four (4) enlisted men qualified in personnel administration.

d. The various sub-sections are names as follows: Classification – 2, Correspondence – 1, Awards and Decorations – 2, Files – 2, Personal Affairs – 2, Enlisted Men's sub-section – 5, Officer's sub-section – 3.

e. At the month's end this new section was operating smoothly. Office space allotted the section is inadequate but it is all that is available at the present time – three quarters of a Quonset hut.

3. Staff Diary: In compliance with paragraph 2, Section IV, Regulation 20-1, XXI Bomber Command, dated 3 October 1944, subject: "Historical Program," a staff diary was begun on the first of the month and is being maintained daily.

4. Reports of Survey: Seven Reports of Survey for the 25th Bombardment Squadron were processed through this headquarters during the month of May 1945, totaling \$6091.70.

5. Officers

a.	Strength as of 1 May	Strength as of 31 May
	Colonel 1	Colonel 1
	Lt Col 4	Lt Col 4
	Major 8	Major 8
	Captain 17	Captain 16
	1 st Lt 9	1 st Lt 9
	2 nd Lt <u>0</u>	2 nd Lt <u>2</u>
	Total 39	Total 41

b. Transfers from Headquarters:
1st Lt (4823) Eldred L. Hadley, 0 862 828, AC, trfd to 45th Bomb Sq per Par 3, 80 #66, Hq 44th Bomb Gp

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

c. Transfers to Headquarters:

Capt (0142) Carroll K. Tolle, 0 566 927, AC, asgd fr 58th Bomb Wg per Par 2, SO #19, Hq 58th Bomb Wg
2nd Lt (2120) Donald E. Lageson, 0 699 941, AC, asgd fr 44th Bomb Sq per Par 4, SO #69, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
1st Lt (9301) Edward E. Harding III, 0 574 878, AC, asgd fr 58th Bomb Wg per Par 6, SO #30, Hq 58th Wg

d. Appointments:

Capt (5000) Wallace F. Snow, 0 562 089, AC, aptd Asst Gp Adj per Par 2, SO #65, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
2nd Lt (2120) Donald E. Lageson, 0 699 941, AC, aptd Gp Personal Affairs O per Par 6. SO #70, Hq 40 Bomb Gp
Maj (2120) Joseph H. Knight, 0 366 535, AC, aptd Gp Transportation O Per Par 4, SO #79, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
1st Lt (4113) Garland H. Butler, 0 562 659, AC, aptd Gp Mess O (EM) per Par 5, SO #79, Hq 40th Bomb Gp

e. Appointments Terminated:

Capt (5000) Wallace F. Snow, 0 562 089, AC, fr Personal Affairs O per Par 5, SO #70, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Capt (4530) William M. Knight, 01 554 225, Ord, fr Transportation O per Par 3, SO #79, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
1st Lt (4113) George A. Land, 0 581 994, AC fr Gp Mess O (EM) per Par 5, SO #79, Hq 40th Bomb Gp

f. Promotions: None

6. Enlisted Men:

a. Strength as of 1 May

M Sgt	6
T Sgt	9
S Sgt	25
Sgt	40
Cpl	25
Pfc	18
Pvt	<u>0</u>
	123

Strength as of 31 May

M Sgt	6
T Sgt	10
S Sgt	25
Sgt	44
Cpl	27
Pfc	19
Pvt	<u>0</u>
	131

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

b. Transfers from Headquarters:

Cpl (754) Milton R. Shils, 12 012 857, trfd to XX Bomber Command Fwd Area Det #1 per Par 1, SO #90, Hq XX Bomber Command
Cpl (405) Emil Kucek, 12 133 181, trfd to 58th Bomb Wg per Par 5, SO #34, Hq 58th Bomb Wg

c. Transfers to Headquarters:

T/4 (766) Leland Hallett, 19 059 130, fr 22nd Air Serv Gp per Par 1, SO #108, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Sgt (824) Charles H. Morgan, 39 270 625, fr 11th Photo Lab Bomb Gp, per Par 2, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Sgt (060) Joseph A. Matthews, 31 233 260, fr 11th Photo Lab Bomb Gp, per Par 2, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Sgt (060) Jessie L. Miller, 36 291 228, fr 11th Photo Lab Bomb Gp, per Par 2, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Cpl (050) Alfred R. Eagen, 36 729 976, fr 11th Photo Lab Bomb Gp, per Par 2, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Cpl (060) Fred E. Ramirez, 39 019 953, fr 11th Photo Lab Bomb Gp, per Par 2, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Pfc (055) Krally J. Krallis, 31 311 330, fr 11th Photo Lab Bomb Gp, per Par 2, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Pfc (055) Jack J. Talenfeld, 33 696 934, fr 11th Photo Lab Bomb Gp, per Par 2, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Sgt (684) Elmer W. Deutsch, 17 121 103, fr 25th Bomb Sq per Par 4, SO #70, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
T Sgt (502) Harrom M. Banks, 18 040 196, fr 44th Bomb Sq per Par 8, SO #79, Hq 40th Bomb Gp

d. Promotions:

T/4 (766) Leland Hallett, 19 059 130, converted to Sgt per Par 7, SO #66, Hq 40th Bomb Gp
Pfc (070) Charles A. Gaskil, 37 638 615, promoted to Cpl per Par 3, SO #69, Hq 40th Bomb Gp

e. Furloughs:

Sgt (405) Melvin T. King, 36 655 670, was granted an emergency furlough of 30 days to Maywood, Illinois, 31 May 1945

7. Court Martial – Punishment Under 104th Article of War – Delinquencies: There were no cases of the above in this Headquarters for the period 1 May 1945 to 31 May 1945

8. Bond Participation:

Enlisted Men	345.00	13% Participation
--------------	--------	-------------------

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Officers	<u>900.00</u>	<u>34%</u> Participation
Total Amount	\$1245.00	18% Average Of Headquarters

9. Personal Transfer Accounts: Again members of this Headquarters are sending home a grand total of \$3540.00, taking advantage of Purchase Transfer Account available to all personnel desiring to send money to the mainland.

10. Soldiers' Deposits: Enlisted Men of Headquarters have deposited \$1455.00 in Soldiers' Deposits.

11. Awards and Decorations:

a. Air Medal:

(1) Per General Order No 85, Headquarters Twentieth Air Force, Office of the Deputy Commander, dated 9 April 1945

Maj Chester R. Lamb, AC

(2) Per General Order No 88, Headquarters Twentieth Air Force, Office of the Deputy Commander, dated 12 April 1945

Major Louis E. Scherck, AC
Capt Lee A. Hall, AC
Capt Forrest G. Wood, AC
1st Lt Lawrence B. Eustis, AC
M Sgt Grant N. Zeigler
Sgt Roy E. Huwel (Fwd Echelon)

(3) Per General Order No 97, Headquarters Twentieth Air Force, Office of the Deputy Commander, dated 20 April 1945

Major William J. Rivers, AC
Capt Bartholomew A. Alder, AC
Capt John T. Brannan, AC

b. Distinguished Flying Cross:

(1) Per General Order No 85, Headquarters Twentieth Air Force, Office of the Deputy Commander, dated 9 April 1945

Lt Col Henry P. Luna, AC

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

1. Group Tech Supply
2. Group Electrical Shop
3. Group Sheet Metal Shop
4. Group CFC and Bombsight Maintenance Shop
5. Group Communications Shop
6. Group Radar Shop

This consolidation has become necessary, not only because it has been so directed by higher headquarters, but because of the proposed increase in the number of aircraft and speeded up operation. In this manner it is possible to shift specialists wherever the need is greatest. Severe battle damage can also be handled more expeditiously.

The introduction of PLM to this Group has been a painful undertaking in one respect. The opinion seems to be that the pride and individuality that a crew has felt for its aircraft has been done away with. The feeling, however, is slowly falling by the wayside as realization of PLM advantages begin to become apparent.

New Modifications

Since we have been here on Tinian, we have received nine new aircraft. Two major changes in equipment were introduced with these aircraft. First – a new nacelle door actuating system, and second – an independent oil supply for propeller feathering purposes.

The nacelle door actuating system is entirely mechanical as compared to the electrical system previously used. The nacelle doors are activated through a mechanical cable control system operated by the main landing gear. Since operation is entirely independent of the electrical system, a fuse failure or limit switch maladjustment which might prevent nacelle door operation can no longer be a contributing cause of accidents. The pilot's emergency pull handle which was used with the electrical nacelle door system is also eliminated.

This new system should prove no problem in maintenance, and should certainly practically eliminate most of our landing gear failures.

The independent oil supply for prop feathering has been a much sought after modification for some months. The standard prop feathering system utilized engine oil to accomplish the feathering cycle. Consequently, should an engine lose its oil supply either through consumption or engine failure, it would be impossible to feather the prop. Many a B-29 has been lost for this reason.

With this new system, an independent oil supply is provided, for each engine, in the form of a five gallon tank located in each nacelle. This oil supply thus assuring an adequate supply for feathering.

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Combat Record

We flew eight combat missions during the month of May. Although the records aren't too impressive engineering wise, they can be stacked up pretty favorably with those of any group in any wing with the same assigned aircraft.

The following table should give a pretty clear picture of the 40th's standing:

<u>Aircraft Scheduled</u>	<u>No A/C Airborne</u>	<u>No Ground Aborts</u>	<u>No Air Aborts</u>	<u>No Aircraft Bombing PT</u>	<u>% A/C Sch' Id Bombing Mainland</u>	<u>% AC Airborne Bombing Mainland</u>
31	31	0	0	31	100	100
33	33	0	1	32	97	97
33	32	1	2	30	91	94
24	24	0	0	24	100	100
34	32	2	2	30	88.5	94
36	35	1	2	33	92	94.5
33	31	2	2	29	88	93.5
33	31	2	3	28	85	90.5
257	249	8	12	237	92.5	95

% Aborts Due To

<u>Personnel Error</u>	<u>Mechanical Failure</u>
25	75

Six aircraft were lost on combat missions during the month, and one lost during operational flight.

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Aircraft lost were: 42-24894
42-65269
42-63538
42-63498
42-65271
42-24492
42-24462 (Operational)

Battle damage took its toll on these eight missions. As a result of battle damage, aircraft 42-24740 and 42-28579 have yet to be surveyed on their return to base.

The following aircraft suffered battle damage during the months:

42-65455 (Twice)	42-24739	42-24740
42-24736	42-65328 (Twice)	42-69659 (Twice)
42-24846	42-24620	42-24795 (Twice)
44-70815	42-24542	42-65233 (Twice)
44-69698	42-24541	42-24685
42-24888	42-24757 (Twice)	42-69992
42-24718	42-24579	42-70085
		44-70091
		42-24752

The engineering section has had its problems since arriving here, although they are not as acute as they were during our stay in India.

Here, the supply problem has virtually vanished, being situated in the same location as our depot supply, has done away with the problem of having aircraft grounded for parts for more than a few hours. In India, this situation often kept an airplane on the ground for days at a time.

Depot facilities for aircraft repair also have kept aircraft in the air to a much greater extent than in India. Easily accessible machine shops, sheet metal shops, dope and fabric shops and the like, have made former maintenance and repair problems practically non-existent.

FREDERICK NOEL
Captain, Air Corps
Asst Engineering Officer

* * * * *

SCHOOLS AND TRAINING

There are no significant changes in organization for the month of May. The Schools Office has completed on the 10th of May and the training section is in full operation.

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

The most stubborn problem of the month was finding available space to use as class rooms for the training of replacement and regular crews. The problem was partially solved through the use of pyramidal tents but even these were not sufficient as they are too small. It is hoped that the problem will be completely solved by the construction of Quonset huts to be used as classrooms. They will be available by the 15th of June it is hoped.

Next the problem of giving proficiency checks to all combat crews has been acute due to the fact that crews have been flying so many missions that there is not time. Group Specialists have also been so busy that even proficiency check exams haven't been prepared until the latter part of the month. It is expected that this problem will be cleared up in June and proficiency checks given all combat crew members.

The problem of Synthetic Trainers is still with us. Loran Trainers at 58th Wing being utilized daily. All trainers will be located at Wing and it is expected several different types of trainers will be installed and in operation in June.

There were no significant changes in training requirements during the month of May.

Target identification was stressed during May to familiarize all crew members concerned with targets being struck. Air Sea Rescue and ditching were stressed to make every crew member familiar with emergencies bound to arise in POA. Fourteen replacement crews were assigned to the 40th Bomb Group during May and intensive training given in all subjects of vital importance in this theater.

During the first part of May most of our flying consisted of familiarization flights around our local islands and a little refreshing on the bombing ranges. Due to the influx of replacement crews and the possibility of rotation for our lead crews the problems of training have increased considerably. The lead crews in training are being trained by our old lead crews during practice bombing missions. The replacement crews are given familiarization and proficiency rides by experienced combat personnel within the squadrons.

The number of man hours of ground school conducted during the month of May were 10933. The number of flight training for the month of May were 475:15.

SIDNEY I. NEEDLEMAN
Captain, Air Corps
Schools Officer

*

*

*

*

*

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Radar

There is still a shortage of radar operators in the Group. Wing A-1 sent a wire requesting replacements, but none have arrived.

The age old question of aeronautical rating for MOS (0141) radar operators was carried directly to General of the Armies Arnold by Major General LeMay.

A radar intelligence officer joined the group this month who should prove to be a great aid in preparing better briefings and target studies.

The entire radar operating plan was revised this month from a squadron level to a group level. The Group radar maintenance officer is general overseer of all radar maintenance functions. The Group radar operations officer has charge of all matters pertaining to operations and the planning of all missions, in preparing briefings and interrogations.

Radar personnel are divided into three sections, each of which is in charge of an officer. One section is in charge of all maintenance, another all radar training, the third section has charge of all inspections, modifications, and installations.

At present most of the energy of the line personnel is being devoted to building up their shops and mock-ups.

DONALD L. STUMPF
Captain, Air Corps
Radar Officer

*

*

*

*

*

RCM

RCM activity in the month of May 1945 reached a high peak with offensive counter-measures being used for the first time in aircraft of the 40th Bombardment Group. "Rope" was carried on the night strikes against Nagoya and Tokyo and electronic jammers were carried against Yohohama and Osaka. "Rope," an untuned metallic reflector 400 feet long, succeeded in confusing the Japanese radar to a large extent. Search lights would follow the falling "rope" and leave the aircraft which dropped the "rope." There was some indication on the Tokyo raid that some of the enemy operators were ceasing to be fooled by our simple tactics. No elaborate deception plans could be drawn involving the use of "rope" because of the limited supply. The effectiveness of the electronic jamming is hard to judge due to the fact that the jamming was done in daylight. However, some indications of success are available. When a particular enemy radar was spot

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

jammed (i.e. when it received particular attention from an observer) it would leave the air. This indicates that our "jam" was getting to his set and causing trouble. Even more significant this shows a very low level of enemy operator training.

The RCM observers were busy on search and spot jamming assignments. Lt R. E. Euell of the 25th Bomb Squadron brought back an average of 12 DF' ed enemy radar positions on two search missions. His third mission would, undoubtedly, have been as successful if his aircraft had not ditched approximately 100 miles from Tinian, resulting in the loss of his logs and equipment. Lt R. E. Euell was picked up six hours in his raft by a naval vessel. After only a few days rest Lt Euell volunteered for a spot jamming mission and flew on the Osaka strike. Lt C. O. Britt of the 44th Bomb Squadron flew seven missions on centimeter search and two of these seven were spot jamming in addition. Lt E. B. Boyd of the 45th Bomb Squadron flew five missions both search and jamming.

Two new pieces of equipment were received for runners of the planned flood of equipment. One AM-18/APT, a high power amplifier, was received. This amplifier increases the effectiveness of our present equipment almost four times. To nullify the enemy's low frequency radar is the purpose of the AN/ARQ-8, a combination receiver and jammer.

With the loss of aircraft #498 the Group is reduced to one DF' ing antenna. A new "whirligig" type of antenna with continuous presentation is nearing completion and will be installed.

Shop personnel have been working on the Group shop in the Engineering line. When finished it should be entirely adequate.

FREDERICK D. SELBIE JR
1st Lt, Air Corps
RCM Officer

* * * * *

COMMUNICATIONS

The Group communications section is now operating according to plan, and difficulties normally encountered in setting up facilities at a new station are gradually being ironed out.

A maintenance shop for Group consolidated maintenance and supply has been built on the line despite great difficulties encountered in obtaining lumber. Due to the efforts of a few men from the 25th, 44th, and 45th Squadrons, maintenance benches, mock-ups of equipment, and supply bins were quickly constructed.

The Group communications maintenance shop is now in operation, supplying the Group with a new high in efficient maintenance, by combining the efforts of the three squadron communications sections in one Group organization.

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

Telephone communications in the Group area has been improved with the addition of a second switchboard, and patching board. This was necessary due to the increased demand for additional telephones in the area.

The radio receiver racks and receivers that were used in our Group Air Ground Station in India were installed in the communications building in the Group area. The receivers will now be used for training new aerial radio operators, and for monitoring the Wing Air Ground strike frequencies.

DANIEL REUTHER, JR.
1st Lt, Air Corps
Actg Communications Officer

* * * * *

ORDNANCE

No new type of munitions were employed during this period. On the eight combat missions flown, aircraft were loaded with demolition type of bombs for three. Incendiary types of munitions were employed for the balance. These included single incendiary bombs of the 100 and 500 lb size classes and clusters of thermite and gasoline gel filled individual incendiary bombs. White phosphorus bombs and grenades continued to be employed in various combinations as assembly point markers on daylight missions.

No new developments were effected during this period. However, recommendations were sent forward on new tools to be added to standard armorers tool kits. These included tools, jigs, and gages to be used on disassembly, maintenance, inspections and assembly of the Cal .50 Machine Gun, M2 (Acft) basic, and the Carbine, Cal .30, M1. Chief among these new tools were special wrenches for disassembly of the Carbine bolt group and machine gun oil buffer, back plate, trunnion block and barrel jackets groups.

The M27 bomb service truck with bomb handling equipment was employed in all bomb hauling and loading operations. In addition, tractor and 40 foot trailer units were employed in hauling the large number of incendiary munitions required for some of the missions. These proved effective when crane equipment was available for loading and unloading operations. When it was required to load or unload such equipment by hand nothing was gained in their use in bomb hauling operations.

Considerable tests and observations have proven the M27 bomb service truck with equipment furnished works best in hauling demolition bombs of 1000 lbs and over. For 500 lb size bombs and clusters the M27 truck used as cargo carrier and prime mover for the M5 trailer proved

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

most effective in handling munitions of that type. Furthermore, the use of bomb platforms and M1 lift trucks permits a more rapid and efficient handling of bombs during off loading and "bombing up" operations at the airplane. More work is being conducted in order to determine the best method of handling each type of bomb and cluster. When such a method it will become a standard operational procedure in all bomb handling activities for ordnance sections of all squadrons in the Group.

Since resumption of Bombay operations by this Group at its new base changes have taken place in the organization of ordnance work. Such operational procedure is now in effect:

1. Ordnance sections now receive, haul and load orders from their respective squadron operations.
2. Each section prepares its own stores slips and draws its required ammunition from the Island dumps.
3. The Group ordnance is given the responsibility of seeing that such information is furnished the squadron ordnance personnel and is responsible to see that proper action is taken on receipt of mission information and that required munitions are delivered in proper condition by squadron ordnance sections for loading into the aircraft scheduled for the mission. All actual loading operations are carried out by armament personnel. Fuzing and final inspection of the bomb load is conducted by ordnance personnel after loading operations are completed.
4. The Group ordnance officer furnishes the S-2 office with all necessary information regarding bomb loads and fuzing as soon as possible after take off.

JAMES G. MAC ALLISTER
Captain, Air Corps
Ordnance Officer

* * * * *

GUNNERY

During the month of May this Group has participated in eight missions to the Empire. Gunnery on all missions this Group has been very successful. On all missions this Group has fired 10540 rounds of ammunition. A total of 67 Japanese aircraft were sighted which made a total of six attacks on our formations. A total of two enemy aircraft are claimed as destroyed by this Group. Less trouble is being encountered in this theater with the gunnery equipment than was anticipated at first. The gunnery equipment is receiving preventative maintenance in lieu of routine maintenance due to the fact that all ground checking equipment has not arrived in this

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

theater. This next month will find all maintenance facilities in operation with better maintenance as their objective. Malfunctions have been fewer than expected on these missions.

The most outstanding modification of the equipment this month is the new nose computer that will allow faster and more accurate tracking on frontal attacks. Ships arriving in the theater this month have the C1 Central Fire Control System which has the new "out of synchronization fire control" relay. This is quite an improvement over the old system but its advantages are not being utilized to the fullest extent as its primary purpose is to protect wing ships from being fired upon as the top gunner takes control of the upper forward turret. This device prevents firing of the upper forward turret until the sight and turret are within three degrees of one another. At the present time the upper turrets are assigned to the top gunner on all missions under all conditions excepting when the top gunner becomes a casualty.

A new type of weapon that is being encountered in this theater that was not used in the CBI theater is the "ball of fire." S2 has not identified this weapon as yet but by experience the gunners have found that this weapon is not a suicide aircraft and that the most important feature of this weapon is the psychological effect on the gunners. According to the scanty information available at this time this weapon is fired into the air from a ground gun and is suspended pended in the air by a balloon or parachute. Crews are cautioned against firing at this weapon for fear of hitting other B-29' s in the immediate area.

Directives and orders issued this month include the removal of tracer ammunition from all ammunition to be used on night missions. Gunners are prohibited from test firing during night hours. Crews are ordered to hold their fire until fired upon on all night missions. The Group has standardized all ammunition loads which is 1200 rounds for all night missions and 3400 rounds for all day missions.

A.F. MC GLAUN JR
WOJG, USA
Actg Gunnery Officer

* * * * *

TECHNICAL INSPECTOR

Due to the fact that Group and squadron specialized sections were still in the process of setting up their departments only airplanes and airplane forms and records were inspected this month. The inspections revealed that the maintenance of airplanes continued to be very satisfactory.

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

The following discrepancies were the most commonly noted in general:

1. Laxity on the part of some of the combat crews to record premission inspection of auxiliary equipment on the Forms 1-A.
2. Failure of some of the flight chiefs to inspect and initial the form 41-B daily when maintenance was performed and entries made in the forms.
3. Failure to comply with Technical Order 01-20EJ-78, Installation of Rudder Aileron and Elevator Tab Hinge Pin Retainers.
4. Failure to comply with XXI Bomber Command A.T.I. 01-20EJ-1043, Relocation of Ammeters.
5. Propeller feathering lines being damaged due to broken anchor clamps and chafing.
6. Worn and loose engine exhaust stacks and cracked and broken brackets.
7. Rust and corrosion was noted to be setting in on all equipment especially on the bomb bay door emergency release cables and springs and microphone connecting plugs.
8. Radio compass loop dehydrator crystals were found in need of reactivation.
9. A-4 bomb releases, gunner's salvo switches, and pilot's salvo switches were found in many cases to be unsafetied.

WILLIAM J. HELDT
Captain, Air Corps
Technical Inspector

* * * * *

The month of May 1945 brought about the re-establishment of the Air Inspector's Department at APO #247 with Lt Col White as Air Inspector, and Captain Heldt as Air Inspector, Technical. The administrative section not yet having arrived from India, the services of T Sgt Banks, 44th Bomb Squadron, were recruited to handle this department.

Inspections as conducted by the Air Inspector's Department for the month of May were necessarily of a general nature, as the 40th Bomb Group was still in the process of setting itself up and not prepared for any extensive inspections. However, all squadrons, plus the Group

SECRET

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

were given a tactical inspection and all squadron engineering offices and airplanes were given a technical inspection. The administrative section did not conduct any formal inspections as such, but did study the new personnel section being set up in Headquarters, which now consolidates all squadron records with the exception of a few items such as; Squadron Council Book, Daily Sick Book, etc.

The Air Inspector's Department hopes to be in full operation by the month of June, during which time formal inspections will be made of all activities within the 40th Bomb Group.

JOSEPH D. WHITE
Lt Col, Air Corps
Air Inspector

* * * * *

MEDICAL

The medical section of the Group continues to function at the consolidated Group dispensary. This arrangement has proven to be fairly satisfactory in spite of the fact that there are no facilities available for caring for quarters cases (bed patients). A partitioned examining room has been constructed where privacy for certain types of examinations and consultations is obtained. This room is also used for physio-therapy treatments with the ultraviolet and infrared lamps. The Wing dispensary has not yet materialized and all cases are being sent to the 334th Station Hospital.

The health of the Group continues to be good. There are no medical or surgical problems.

The supply problems of last month have been greatly reduced. The water situation has also improved. The daily per capita now supplied is approximately 18½ gallons as compared with 3½ gallons last month. The waste disposal system of the consolidated mess hall broke down this month due to overloading and misuse. A new and larger grease trap and soakage pit are now under construction. This new system should prove adequate.

There were four battle casualties resulting directly from enemy action this month. Three of the men incurred only minor superficial wounds but Lt William L. Gardner of the 45th Bomb Squadron received two moderately severe wounds of the buttocks as a result of enemy flak. Four complete crews minus one man are reported as missing in action. Lt Dale E. Ellis of the 25th Bomb Squadron of Lt Donelan's crew was picked up in a one man life raft after 12 days afloat. He was hospitalized at Saipan and from the latest reports he suffered from exposure and sunburn. All but one man of another crew that bailed out over the ocean were picked up by Air-Sea Rescue in a few hours. Cpl Robert V. Boalton is reported missing in action.

LEE A. HALL
Captain, Medical Corps
Group Surgeon

SECRET

Group History, 40th Bomb Gp, 1 May thru 31 May 45

STATISTICS

1. Combat Records:

a.	Combat Missions	8
b.	No Aircraft Airborne	249
c.	No Aircraft Bombing Primary	231
d.	Tons of Bombs Dropped	1454
e.	Personnel Casualties	52
f.	Enemy Aircraft Destroyed	2
g.	No Sorties Per Crew	5.6

2. Flying Time:

a.	Combat Time for May	4117:00 Hours
b.	Training Time for May	475:15
c.	Miscellaneous Time	34:20
d.	Total Time	4644:30
e.	Average Flying Per Assigned A/C	102:29

3. Combat Crews:

a.	Replacement Crews Received	14
b.	Replacement Aircraft Received	8
c.	Aircraft Lost	8
d.	Aircraft on Hand as of Last Day	39
e.	Combat Crews Assigned as of Last Day	49
f.	Combat Crews Available as of Last Day	46
g.	Total Number of Officers (Group)	444
h.	Total Number of Enlisted Men (Group)	1801

R. G. SEIPP
Captain, Air Corps
Statistical Officer