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P.R.C.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY
19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
318TH FIGHTER GROUP
SEVENTH AIR FORCE
ARMY AIR FORCES, PACIFIC OCEAN AREA
A.P.O. #245

DECLASSIFIED
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Historical Division AAFPOA

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ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19th FIGHTER SQUADRON, 318TH FIGHTER GROUP, SEVENTH AIR FORCE.

April 1, 1945 - April 30, 1945

1. On 1 April, 1945, 40 Officer's and 50 enlisted men with the Squadron airplanes, moved to Kobler Fld. Saipan M.I. and were placed on DS W/Det Hq. 318th Ftr. Gp. The movement took 30 minutes.

On the 6th April the Squadron left Kagman Point Field, Saipan, Marianas Islands to proceed to new permanent station, with 17 Officers and 162 Enlisted Men. Arrived at Tanapag Harbor, Saipan, M.I. at 1145, 45 minutes after the last man had left Kagman Point Field. Arrived at new permanent station at IE Shima, Ryukyu Islands, 30 April, at 1130 I.

2. Losses in action - Negative
3. Awards and Decorations - Negative
4. Organization - Negative
5. Strength: (Personnel)

1 April

Officers - 73
 Enlisted Men - 246

30 April

Officers - 71
 Enlisted Men - 247

6. Strength: (Airplanes)

1 April

22 P-47D's
 1 P-47N

30 April

37 P-47N's

7. Losses: (Airplanes)

None

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ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF. (CON'T)

Narrative History:

On April 1, 1945, all flying personnel, and a small crew of mechanics, radio men, and armorers, left East Field, and set up for training and operations at Kobler Field, Saipan. After arriving at Kobler Field the squadron began exchanging P-47D's for P-47N's and by the twentieth of April, 37 P-47N's had been assigned to the outfit.

All pilots were checked out in the "N" without difficulty during the latter part of the month. They found the new plane more maneuverable and a little faster than the "D". However, after shooting a few landings in the "N", all pilots agree that it is definitely nose heavy, and care must be taken in applying brakes.

On April 29, 1945, the first long range mission with the P-47N's was dispatched from Kobler. The strike was composed of twenty (20) P-47's and three (3) navigation escort B-29's. The objective of the mission was to stikke targets of opportunity at Truk. The flights arrived over the target at 1130K and attacked airfields and air installations at Moen, Param, and Eten Islands. Results of the strafing attacks were undetermined as there were no fires observed. Meagre, inaccurate, continuously pointed, heavy A/A was encountered over the target. None of our planes were damaged, and all returned to base.

The ground eschelon began loading operations on April 3rd. Cargo was put aboard the USS Hall Young, and troops were loaded aboard the USS Kemmore on April 6. The squadron set sail from Saipan on the morning of April 7, 1945. Our convoy consisted

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19th FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF. (CON'T).

Narrative History Con't:

of the Kenmore and destroyer escort. The first few days at sea were uneventful. The weather was good and the squadron had only isolated cases of seasickness. Quarters and messing facilities for both officers and enlisted men were excellent. The food was much better than we had been accustomed to while stationed at Saipan.

On Monday, April 9, 1945, the convoy put into the lagoon at Ulithi. The Kenmore anchored there for ~~ten~~^{twelve} days waiting for the formation of a large convoy to be formed. While at anchor all personnel aboard were afforded the opportunity to go ashore at Mog Mog, the Navy recreation island in that area. Excellent recreation facilities were available, and it proved to be a welcome change from the limited facilities aboard ship.

While waiting at Ulithi numerous lectures were given to all troop personnel by the squadron intelligence officer, ordnance officer, medical officer, and troop commander. The intelligence officer covered in detail the operation and the squadron's part in the operation, the geography of the area in which we would be based, enemy capabilities, censorship, and security. The ordnance officer discussed booby traps, land mines, and Jap ordnance equipment. The flight surgeon cautioned the men about health conditions to be encountered on Okinawa.

On April 19th the Kenmore joined nine other troop transports and cargo ships, four LCI's, one net tender, two DD's, and a DE. This convoy departed from Ulithi on that day bound for Okinawa.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF (CON'T)

Narrative History Con't:

As the convoy neared Okinawa the anxiety of all personnel increased. For a period of forty-eight hours the convoy was followed by Jap subs. Upon two occasions the DD's in the convoy attacked Jap subs with depth charges, and it is believed that one of the subs was definitely sunk. The convoy suffered no loss or damage during its trip to Okinawa.

The convoy arrived at Okinawa on April 26th. The Kenmore put into the transport area at Yontan for a few hours, and then it was ordered to the transport area at Ie Shima. Due to the tactical situation at Okinawa the squadron was informed that it would not operate out of the field originally assigned (Naha) but would go ashore at Ie Shima and occupy the field there. Upon arrival at Ie Shima the squadron had to remain aboard ship until called ashore by the island commander. That evening the Kenmore moved from the transport area at Ie Shima and anchored in Nago Wan for the night. Shipping at Nago Wan was under sustained air attack throughout the night, but suffered no losses. The following day the Kenmore was ordered to the transport area at Yontan. That night the cargo ship Hall Young, which had remained at Nago Wan, was rammed by a Jap suicide plane. There were no casualties suffered among the personnel, but the squadron lost several vehicles, .50 cal. ammunition, and some rockets. The remaining equipment was eventually unloaded without loss.

The Kenmore remained at Yontan until April 30. During its stay there it was under daily air attack but suffered no damage, although other ships at anchor in the area were either sunk or damaged.

On April 30, 1945, the squadron went ashore at

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19th FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF. (CON'T)

Narrative History Con't:

Ie Shima. Upon arrival at the site assigned for our camp area it was found that the area was still mined. While the entire group waited, sappers demined a small area where pup tents were set up, fox holes dug, guard posts assigned, and the squadron settled down for the night. Jap snipers were active during the night, but no casualties resulted. The island was under Jap air attack during the major portion of the night.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

1 April - 30 April

1945

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF (Cont'd)

Chronological History, 1 April - 30 April 1945

1. Sqdn. sections packing their equipment preparatory to moving.
2. Sqdn. maintained an 8 ship alert. Packing still continues.
3. Maintained an alert status with 8 planes from 0600 to 1830I. Sectional equipment is being moved down to the decks at Tanapag Harbor.
4. Flying training consisted of one "tracking mission" (2 planes) and a simulated strafing mission on Saipan automatic weapons. (2 planes)
The movement of Sqdn. cargo to the decks continued.
5. Pilots flew 10 check-out flights in the new P-47N from Kebler Field. Two planes were ferried to Guam (P-47D's) and two new planes (P-47N's) were flown back. Capt. Stetter assumed command of Ground Echelon in the absence of Maj. Williams, who has moved to Kebler Field, Saipan, with 40 officers and 50 enlisted men. 1st Lt. Alfredo Garza, of this Sqdn. was transferred to Hq. 318th Fighter Gp.
6. Permanent change of station. Left Kagman Point Field Saipan, Marianas Islands, with 17 officers, and 162 enlisted men, at 1400. Arrived at Tanapag Harbor at 1445. Boarded SS Kenmore to proceed by water to new destination. In addition 1 officer and 9 enlisted men boarded the SS Hall Young our cargo ship also to proceed to our destination. Meanwhile training continues at Kebler Field, where the pilots of our organization continue to familiarize themselves with the new P-47N.
7. Left Tanapag Harbor, Saipan M.I. aboard SS Kenmore at 0700, and proceeded south. Kept the islands of the southern Marianas in sight throughout the day. The sea is calm.
8. At sea enroute to new station. Sea calm and everyone seems to be occupied on details, reading, and card games. Morale high.
9. Anchored at Ulithi, Western Carolines, at 0700 enroute to new station. This is apparently where we are to rendezvous with a large convey prior to proceeding to our new station. It is hard to imagine the tremendous amount of Naval and Merchant Marine tonnage here. Ships as far as the eye could see. Here conveys are formed that will carry troops and essential war materials against the Japanese. It is also the base from which the fast carrier fleets operate that roam the Pacific giving the Japs a bad time.
9. Still anchored at Ulithi. Everyone would like to get ashore.
10. Anchored at Ulithi.
11. Remained anchored at Ulithi until the 20th. During this time all personnel occupied themselves with varied duties, played cards, speculated as to our new destination. All personnel went ashore at least once to Mog Mog Island.
20. Left Ulithi at 1730 enroute to new station and accompanied by 9 other transports and cargo ships. Escorted by 2 destroyers, 1 destroyer escort, 1 mx auxiliary craft (net tender).

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ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF (Cont'd)

Chronological History (Cont'd)

21. At sea enroute to new station. Remained at sea until the 26th, with nothing but a couple of submarine alerts to break the monotony.
26. Dropped anchor at Okinawa Gunto, R.I. at 1545. Total distance traveled approximately 1800 miles. As we approached Okinawa, artillery and Naval shelling is continuously evident. Many fires are observed behind Jap lines.
27. Anchored at Okinawa Gunto R.I. Air raid alerts at 2045 and 2330. It's a helpless feeling, anchored in an area that provides such a lucrative target for suicidal pilots.
28. Anchored at Okinawa Gunto R.I. Underwent 8 hour air raid alert commencing at 1900. No damage to personnel or ship. Everyone is anxious to get ashore.
29. Still anchored at Okinawa. Proceeded to IE Shima, but returned to Okinawa for the night. Air raid alert at 2100.
30. Debarked from SS Kenmore at IE Shima at 1130. The island appears to be in good shape from a point $\frac{1}{2}$ mile offshore. We learned that our cargo ship with one officer and 9 enlisted men from this Sqdn. had been hit when a Jap fighter "crash dived" into it the night of the 27th. No personnel from the 19th ftr. sq. hurt.

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