

39-FL 6-41 (DET B)

18 Feb - 30 Sep 1943

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DETACHMENT "B" NIGHT FIGHTER SQUADRON  
OFFICE OF THE SQUADRON COMMANDER.  
APO 709

1 October 1943.

SUBJECT: Historical Record of Organization.

TO : Commanding General, USAFISPA, APO 502.  
(THRU: Commanding Officer, 18th Fighter Group, APO 709).

1. In compliance with Army Regulations 345-105 dated November 18, 1929, as amended by Changes 1 and 3, the following historical record of this organization is submitted for the period of February 18, 1943 to September 30, 1943.

a. Organization:

- (1) Designation: Detachment "B" Night Fighter Squadron, 13th Air Force.
- (2) Location: APO 709.

b. Changes in organization:

Redesignated Detachment "B" Night Fighter Squadron from 6th Night Fighter Squadron (Det) and assigned to the 13th Air Force per War Department Radiogram dated September 16, 1943.

c. Strength, Commissioned and enlisted.

- (1) February 18, 1943: 7 Officers and 29 enlisted men.
- (2) February 28, 1943: 1 Officer and 1 enlisted man lost en route to APO 709.
- (3) March 1, 1943: 6 Officers and 28 enlisted men.
- (4) March 22, 1943: 1 Flight Surgeon joined organization from APO 959.
- (5) April 1, 1943: 7 Officers and 28 Enlisted men.
- (6) April 19, 1943: 1 Officers and 1 enlisted man assigned to organization.
- (7) April 22, 1943: 3 Officers, 1 Flight Officer (Radio I), 2 enlisted men assigned to organization.
- (8) May 1, 1943: 11 Officers, 1 Flight Officer (Radio I) and 31 enlisted men.
- (9) June 1, 1943: 11 Officers, 1 Flight Officer (Radio I) and 31 enlisted men.
- (10) June 25, 1943: 2 Pilots, 1 Flight Officer (Radio I) and 1 enlisted man joined organization from APO 959.
- (11) July 1, 1943: 11 Officers, 2 Flight Officers (Radio I) and 32 enlisted men.
- (12) July 15, 1943: 1 Pilot placed on special duty with 13th Air Force.

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- (13) July 29, 1943: 1 Pilot transferred to 13th Air Force.
- (14) August 1, 1943: 10 Officers, 2 Flight Officers (Radio I) and 32 enlisted men.
- (15) August 4, 1943: 47 enlisted men joined organization from APO 959.
- (16) August 8, 1943: 4 Pilots assigned from 13th Air Force, 1 Pilot transferred to 13th Fighter Command.
- (17) August 16, 1943: 1 Pilot killed in airplane accident.
- (18) August 23, 1943: 2 Ground Officers, 13 enlisted men assigned to organization from 6th Replacement Depot, APO 502.
- (19) August 24, 1943: 2 Pilots, 1 Flight Officer (Radio I) assigned to organization.
- (20) August 30, 1943: 1 Ground Officer transferred to 70th Fighter Squadron.
- (21) September 1, 1943: 15 Officers, 3 Flight Officers (Radio I) and 92 enlisted men.
- (22) September 2, 1943: 4 Pilots transferred to 12th Fighter Squadron.
- (23) September 8, 1943: 2 enlisted men assigned from 6th Replacement Depot, APO 502.
- (24) September 17, 1943: 4 Pilots assigned to organization.
- (25) September 21, 1943: 1 Officer (Observer Radio I) assigned to organization.
- (26) September 22, 1943: 1 Ground Officer assigned to organization.

- d. Stations (permanent or temporary) of unit or parts thereof.
- (1) Arrived APO 709 from APO 959, February 28, 1943.

- e. Marches and Voyages:
- (1) February 18, 1943: Departed APO 959, 7 Officers and 29 enlisted men.
- (2) February 28, 1943: Arrived APO 709, 6 Officers and 28 enlisted men.  
1 Officer and 1 enlisted man lost in transit.
- (3) May 17, 1943: 2 Pilots and 2 enlisted men departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (4) June 24, 1943: 2 Pilots and 2 enlisted men departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (5) July 17, 1943: 2 Pilots, 1 Flight Officer (Radio I) and 2 enlisted men departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (6) August 25, 1943: 2 Pilots and 1 Flight Officer (Radio I) departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (7) September 16, 1943: 2 Pilots, 1 Flight Officer (Radio I) and 3 enlisted men departed APO 709 to DS APO 502.
- (8) September 19, 1943: 1 Pilot departed from APO 502 to DS APO 715.
- (9) September 26, 1943: 1 Pilot departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.

## Detachment "B" Night Fighter Squadron - Historical Record - October 1, 1943.

f. Campaigns:

## (1) Name of: Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands.

From February 20, 1943 to the present, the pilots and enlisted men of this organization participated at various intervals in the campaign of the Solomon Islands. The superiority of their training and equipment were aptly demonstrated during this campaign.

## (2) Duration: From February 20, 1943 to date in combat crew rotation, six to eight weeks in the Solomon Islands, a week's rest leave in Auckland, New Zealand, after which they return to this base for continued operations.

## (3) Authority ordering:

All pilots ordered into action per Radiogram, Commanding General, USAFISPA.

g. Battles:

- (1) (a) During their period of operations in the Solomon Islands from February 20, 1943, the pilots and crews of this organization have stood nightly ground and air alerts over Guadalcanal, Russells and New Georgia.
- (b) Pilots have on several instances intercepted Jap night raiders and either shot them down or prevented them from making their runs over the targets.

## (2) Following is the score of planes shot down by pilots of this organization:

Confirmed

Probable

Pilot	Type	Date	Type	Date
Capt. Barker			1 MB (Betty)	Aug. 13/43
Capt. Bennett	1 MB (Betty)	Apr. 19/43		
Lt. Van Bibber	1 Zero (Hap)	Jun. 16/43		
Lt. Tuttle	1 MB (Betty)	Jul. 12/43		
Lt. Harrell	1 MB (Betty)	Jul. 17/43		
	1 MB (Betty)	Aug. 14/43		
Lt. Meigs	1 MB (Betty)	Aug. 15/43		
	2 MB (Betty)	Sept. 21/43		

h. Commanding Officers during the Solomon Islands campaign from February 20, 1943 to date:

Major Sidney F. Wharton, February 20, 1943 to July 15, 1943.

Capt. Ralph F. Jones, July 15, 1943 to September 26, 1943.

Capt. Emerson Y. Barker, September 26, 1943 to date.

i. Losses in action, Officers and Enlisted Men.

1st Lt. John E. Meyer lost in flight from APO 959 to APO 709, between February 18, 1943 and February 20, 1943.

2nd Lt. William E. Pinkstaff, O-731654, killed in airplane accident, August 10, 1943.

Sgt. George D. Pratt, lost in flight from APO 959 to APO 709, between February 18, 1943 to February 20, 1943.

1. Former and present members who have distinguished themselves in action:

Major Sidney F. Wharton, Jr., was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 Captain Milton C. Hillebrand, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 Captain Earl C. Bennett, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 1st Lt. Ralph F. Sugnet, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 1st Lt. James A. Harrell, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 1st Lt. Ralph F. Tuttle, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 1st Lt. Henry Meigs II, was awarded the Silver Star on August 23, 1943.  
 S/Sgt. Raymond A. Mooney, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 Corp. Curtis R. Ehlert, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 Corp. Emil M. Stajcer, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.  
 Corp. Edwin E. Tomlinson, was awarded the Air Medal on August 5, 1943.

k. Miscellaneous.

- (1) This detachment made the first long distance flight over water in an A-20 type airplane, when seven such planes left APO 959 bound for APO 709 on February 18, 1943 under the command of Major Sidney F. Wharton.
- (2) Another first for this organization was the introduction of intrusion attacks made upon Kahili airdrome on Bouganville Island by Captain Ralph F. Jones.
- (3) 1st Lt. Henry Meigs II in a spectacular exhibition of flying made visual contact with attacking enemy bombers over Guadalcanal and shot down in flames two of them within 60 seconds. Lt. Meigs was decorated for this feat with the Silver Star by Major General Twining, Commanding General of the 13th Air Force. Major General Twining regretted that so few were there to witness the ceremony, when every eye on the island was upon Lt. Meigs in the sky that fateful night.
- (4) It is difficult to put into words the appreciation of the pilots for the splendid work of the enlisted ground crews. There is an unheralded duty whose reward is the knowledge of a job well done. By their ingenuity and inventiveness they have at times managed to keep more than 75% of their planes in the air. We who know the meaning of "condition red" can only say to the pilots and ground crew of Detachment "B" Night Fighter Squadron: "Thank you for those Japless nights".

*Emerson Y. Barker*  
 EMERSON Y. BARKER,  
 Captain, Air Corps,  
 Commanding.