

“Living On and Under the Wing”

A Biography of:

1st Lt. Joaquin Castro

7th and 13th Army Air Corps

42nd Squadron

Eleventh Bomber Group

WWII Pacific Campaign



His Life and Service for our Freedom

July 4, 2008

By

Arnoldo Guerrero Jr.

Living on and Under the Wing

2009 by Arnold Guerrero
guerrero29@comcast.net

Most images courtesy of Wikipedia, and are used under their GNU Free Documentation License and noted on pages 160-163

Other images used by permission. See page number 160-163 for credits.

Dedicated to my Father
(Ret.) 2nd Lt. Arnaldo Guerrero
1939-2006
49th Armor Division
Army National Guard



Dad's Tank and crew just won Top Gun competition at Ft. Benning GA (top). Dad and I (bottom)

Table of Contents

Preface	7
Getting Started Not Easy	12
Life before the Air Corp.	14
Training with the Air Corp.	22
Hawaii Here I Come	39
The Attack on Pearl Harbor	45
Preparing for War	54
Hawaii in 1942 (January-April)	59
On Captain Hall's Crew	66
Midway	68
Leaving Hawaiian Home	72
Busy-Busy-Busy Month of August	76
Calmer September	83
October Skies	87
New Zealand in November	91
Another Christmas Away from Home	96
Final Days	107
Final Mission	117
Photo Gallery	122
The Crew of Brothers	137
Transcribed Flight Log from Journal	146
Newspaper Article	150
A School Honors his Name	153
Bibliography	161
Appendix: A-2 Report	166



Lt. Carl(Kayo) Wuertele and Sgt. Raymond (Bud) Heilman and crew of 42nd were friends of Joaquin. B-17E # 41-2443 was flown by Lt. Wuertele and Sgt. Heilman. Photos courtesy of Gregg Heilman

Preface

Who was Joaquin Castro? A question I had often asked but got very few answers to. It is my hopes that my research can answer this question, and many others, with all clarity. Before I tell you what I have discovered, the question asked of me is, “how did I get started with this project?” Unfortunately, for me, it was not because I knew the man, though I wished I did. No, I was born in 1962 and Joaquin’s last mission was on February 1, 1943. My father’s family did not talk about him much. In fact, not at all that I can recall during my childhood years. I did not even know I was related to him. I remember, briefly, the mentioning of his name when a local Elementary School named “Citriana” was renamed in the late 60’s as Joaquin Castro Elementary. My uncle Oton Guerrero Jr. was a principal for 10 years when the school was known as Citriana. My mother, Ana, was his secretary for a short time with him as well. Yet, as young as I was, I did not pay much attention to this big event. Hey, a kid has things that are more interesting on his mind. Things like playing football, exploring the nearby wooded area, riding your bike around town or catching your favorite show on TV. Therefore, beyond that moment I did not think much about it or have any interest especially when my family moved away from the neighborhood to a different part of town. Life went on with brief mentioning of Joaquin among certain family members.

It was not until my late High School to early collage years that my father and I went on an errand during the Christmas holidays to the CWV (Catholic War Veterans). While my Dad attended to his business, I roamed along the walls of this large banquet facility reading and admiring brief biographies of many pictured displays of current and past veterans from Mission Texas. After reading a few, I came across Joaquin’s glass framed portrait. In addition to the picture and brief biography, were some medals and other military insignias that enhanced the frame beautifully. It was at this time that I had a memory recall of the event that lead to the renaming dedication ceremony of a local Elementary School to honor Joaquin. By this time, Dad was finished with whatever business he had with the CWV and as he approached me I asked, “Is this the guy the elementary down the street was named after?” With a grin and a mild shocked look on his face he said, “He is not just any guy, he is your distant uncle.” “My uncle?” I said. “Then why was I never told this?” I asked. He responded, “Well you were so young to really understand his heroism that we did not bother telling you about it because you would probably not remember.” He was probably right since a child’s brain can only absorb so much. However, times have changed and new research disproves this old-fashioned mentality and supports the data of kids having the ability to learn many things early in life. Consequently, as I gathered material for this book my daughter, Samantha,

has been asking questions about my work and I am more the happy to share my findings with her. She is my voice for the future and my next spokes person of Joaquin's story.

As my dad and I left the CWV, he began telling me the stories he knew of Joaquin and his service in the military as well as the genealogy to explain my relationship to Joaquin. It was not much to go on because it seems that no one in the family kept up with this particular history. I asked my dad how he came about the medals. He said that one day Joaquin's sister, Vivian, called and asked if he would be interested in Joaquin's military articles because she was getting ready to get rid of them. My dad did not waste any time getting to her home to pick up the articles. Dad's interest in memorabilia was genuine because he was an officer in the Army National Guard and knew how significant it was to preserve any article related to Joaquin. The contents received from Vivian were all in a small box. Yet, as they say, good things come in small packages. Within the box were old photos, a hand written flight logbook and journal, other medals, patches and pins, and a genuine leather wool-lined skull flight cap, which were all very neat items. I asked my father what the medals were for and he could not answer that question. All of what he knew was written down on a document at the Hidalgo County Courthouse in Edinburg, Texas as public record. Therefore, he copied the statement and typed it on paper and had the paper laminated to be place in the frame he made. It read:

*Joaquin Castro 1st/Lt. Pilot
July 18, 1916 to February 1, 1943
Father: Crispin Castro
Mother: Romana Castro*

Born and raised in Mission. Educated in Mission schools and attended Edinburg Junior College 1940. Joined Army Air Force in 1941- Missing in action February 1, 1943.

Lt. Castro served in the Pacific Theater as a Pilot. Received the National Defense Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross, and Air Medal w/oak leaf cluster.

Lt. Castro was stationed at Hickam Field at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack. First Mission man to be commissioned a flying officer when the defense program began. Commissioned at Luke Field, Arizona – November 1941.

Last mission – February 1, 1943 – Flying Fortress – South Pacific.

After exposure to this information, nothing more on the matter was said. We enjoyed the Christmas season together as a family and enjoyed many more

after that. I guess we had it in our minds that we would always have time to explore the box, talk to others that knew him, and gather more information about him. Sorrowfully, that day never came.

Unfortunately, time passed by too fast and if life's challenges were not enough my dad, Arnoldo Guerrero Sr., contracted Hepatitis "C" from a blood transfusion. If this were not enough, the family doctor diagnosed him with Diabetes as well on a later visit. Subsequently, everyone in the family focused on my dad's health and welfare. He valiantly fought the illness for many years until God wanted him home on June 4, 2006. My collective research is dedicated to my father since he was the one that salvaged a vital piece of history for me to share with anyone interested.

After the funeral, I was helping Mom clean out stuff and settle affairs at her home in Mission. While in the kitchen, I happen to raise my head and notice a portion of a familiar object behind my father's chair in the living room. The object was the large frame of Joaquin Castro that my Dad made 27 years prior. I walked towards it and lifted it off the floor for a closer look. I asked my Mom what it was doing here. She said a friend of the family, Arturo Longoria and member of the CWV (Catholic War Veterans), dropped it off to your Dad for safe keeping because they were demolishing the original CWV building and were building a new facility at a different part of town. He knew how much it meant to Dad so he personally delivered it to him. The intentions were to give it back when the new building was finished. However, with Dad's sudden decline in health, priorities shifted and the frame transfer forgotten.

The frame was showing severe signs of age and neglect due to exposure of cigarette smoke when it was hanging at the CWV hall. The wood frame itself was starting to split, the medals had shifted into awkward positions within the frame, and the glass was very dirty due to the ash from cigarette smoke and humidity. In short, it was in very bad shape. I asked my Mom if she would give me the opportunity to restore the frame back to brilliant condition and she said that would be great. I figured if I was going to redo the frame then why not add more information to it. Especially the information that would explain why he was awarded those particular medals that are in the frame. Subsequently, this was the moment I took the challenge of researching Joaquin Castro's life and military service to piece together and share with family, friends, his school and interested historians.

Mom also gave me the box of Joaquin's military memorabilia to help with the project. I worked on rebuilding the frame and explored the contents of the box simultaneously. In the box, I focused on the photos first. Most of the photos did not have any information on them but a few did so this led to more challenges to resolve later. The journal was filled with Joaquin's hand written account of various military activities and missions. In addition, there were personal entries to his girlfriend Gertrudes, also known as Libby, and

his flight log with remarks on various missions. All original entries, in his journal, will be on an appendix of this book. I began scanning and editing the many photos and transcribing the hand written information. The photos were as small as 1x2 inches to as large as postcard size. Some of the photos were in poor condition. Thank goodness, for computer technology and photo software that enabled me to modify the photos and catalog them in digital format to be preserved for years to come. I then took on the frame. I searched the internet to purchase items that I needed to complete this part of the project. With a little hard work, patience and money the frame was completed with all of the original memorabilia and some new additions.

Original Frame



When the frame was finished, I gave it back to my Mom. She was very impressed with the work. On that same day, my uncle Tony (Othon Guerrero Jr.) came to visit my Mom. He too was impressed with the work I had done and thanked me for taking time to honor Joaquin with such a fine tribute. In fact, he suggested sending the frame to the newly opened Mission Museum instead of the CWV so that more people would appreciate it but more importantly inform them of his service and sacrifice for our freedom. He stated that there was already a small display honoring him in the facility but the addition of this frame would greatly enhance it. I thought it was a fantastic idea. Subsequently, I wanted to incorporate as much accurate information about Joaquin's military service as I could to accompany the frame. There was already the information left behind by Joaquin himself that needed to be sorted and interpreted. Libraries are always at my disposal but not always practical. I personally have a small collection of military

books that I can use as reference but the biggest tool I have working for me is the computer, various software and most important access to the World Wide Web.



New Frame

Getting Started Not Easy

Where do I begin? I went back into the box, retrieved the journal, and read it thoroughly to get ideas of what kinds of questions to ask and ultimately answer. I looked upon the photos for answers to some of the question but received none. The next convenient step was to search the internet.

My first stop was the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis and requested Joaquin's records. They denied my request because I was not "NEXT OF KIN". By their standard next of kin were a Mother, Father, Sister, and Brother, surviving non-remarried spouse, son or daughter. Nephew did not make the list. Talk about being dead in the water. I then discovered from my Mom that there was a sister, Olivia Castro, still alive and she lives in Harlingen Texas. My Mom got the phone number from a relative and initiated contact. Mom called me to say that, Olivia, now married and is known as Vivian Pace, was more than happy to help in any way for me just to call her. I did just that. At the end of our conversation, she gave me authorization to use her name to seek any information I could out of the St. Louis Personnel office because she did not have a computer. I then filled out the forms necessary to receive my request and mailed them. The instructions said it would take 6 to 8 weeks to complete. My confidence rose up again because soon I would get answers to the questions. However, that was not the case. I received the correspondence and was terribly disappointed. There were only five or six pages of some documents but nothing more than that. They were sorry it could not be more but there was a big fire on July of 1973 that destroyed millions of military personnel records. All that history went up in smoke!

I went searching on the internet again. This time I found the site of www.armyairforces.com that was a forum dedicated to asking questions about the Army Air Corp, its Groups, its Squadrons, specific missions or, in my case, finding out information about lost relatives. I joined the forum and started asking my questions. The first person to answer was Michael (aka-Paulsador). He was able to provide me with some very good information to get me started. Questions he could not answer were then directed me to Jesse Bently. Jesse was able to give me details of the last mission my uncle flew in and what heroic job he and his crew did for our country and freedom. I am very grateful to both of these men for getting me information I needed to construct Joaquin's history. Yet, it was Michael that provided me with a contact that became invaluable to me. He told me that he remembered a man, Hal, seeking information on his brother or other crew members that flew with him on February 1, 1943. Michael found the entry to the forum but it was dated three years earlier from our initial contacts and Hal's Brother was Capt. Earl Hall. Capt. Earl Hall, now Major, was the

Commanding Officer and pilot with Joaquin for 10 months. It felt as if I hit the jackpot because Hal left a forwarding address, web address and phone number. What a small world we live in because the provided home address is in College Station Texas, an hour and a half to two-hour road trip from my home in Sugar Land. However, three years is a long time and Hal could have moved or changed both addresses and even the phone number. I took the chance and called by cell phone anyway. Hal's wife answered the phone and confirmed that it was the Hall residence. My heart skipped a beat or two. When I asked to speak to Hal, she responded by saying, "who is calling please" and I responded with my name and that I was a relative of first Lt. Joaquin Castro who flew with Capt. Earl Hall! This was a wonderful day! I had gone through several months of very slow information gathering, however, the contact with Hal opened a vital link for communicating information to each other that would fill in gaps to both our puzzles. Hal provided me with a wealth of information that to this day I am very grateful. In fact, Hal was already making a biography to commemorate his brother's achievements. Some of which I will use in this book with Hal's permission to support, elaborate, educate and simply remember the hard work and ultimate sacrifice our, and all, loved ones gave us to keep us safe and most important our keep our FREEDOM.



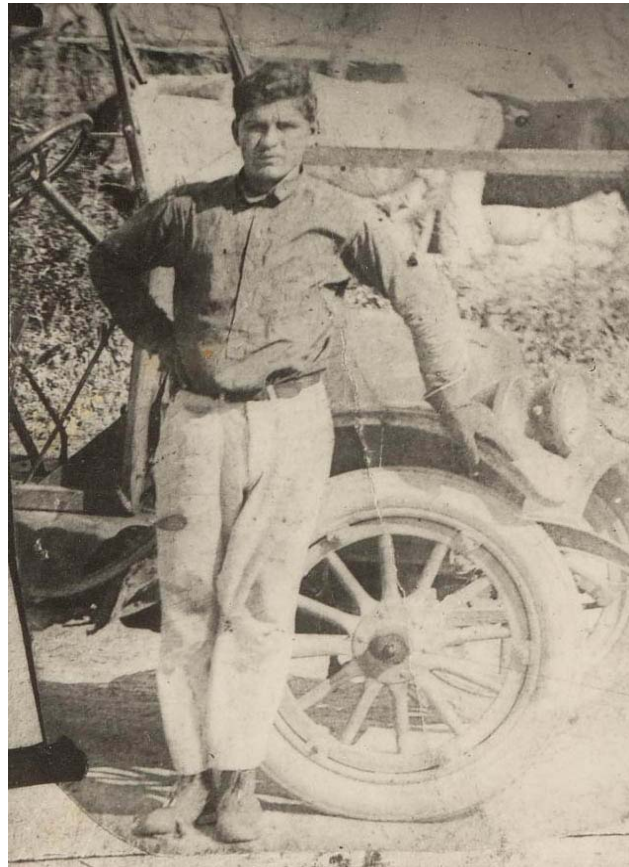
Original photo

Life before the Air Corp

Joaquin Castro was born July 18, 1916 in Mission Texas to Romana S. and Crispin C. Castro. Romana was my great grand-mother. She was previously married to Othon Guerrero who passed away from an unknown cause. She had children with Othon. These children were Othon Jr. (my grandfather), Vicente, Emilio, Theodoro and Gabriella who all resided in Mission. Since my great grandmother remarried, her kids became Joaquin's half brothers and sister. My great grandmother and Crispin adopted two children by the names of Jesus and Olivia. Jesus or "Chuey", as he was called, moved to California and Olivia married and lives in Harlingen Texas. As mentioned previously, Olivia (now Vivian Pace), was the person whose name I was able to use so I could formally request Joaquin's military records from the St. Louis Personnel office. Without her authorization, the detailed information presented here would not have been possible. Thank You Aunt Vivian! Below you will see photos of Joaquin's immediate family. Pictured below are his mother, father, 1/2 brother and stepsister. Since this is an ongoing project, I hope to add more family photos as they become available.



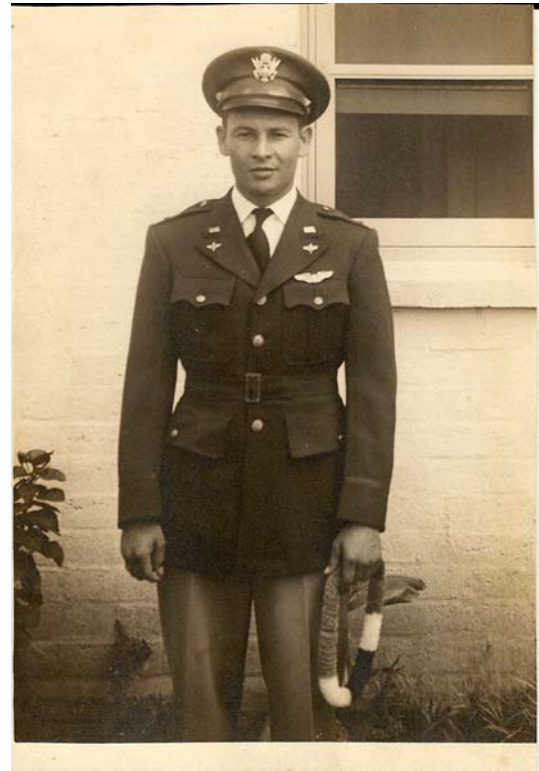
Mother Romana and Father Crispin



1/2-brother Othon (my grandfather)



Parents standing
Olivia (Vivian) Pace lower right with a friend



Joaquin in front of officer's Dorm
Hickam AFB

"NOT FAILURE, BUT LOW AIM, IS CRIME"

Courses	FIRST SIX WEEKS	SECOND SIX WEEKS	THIRD SIX WEEKS	FIRST SEM. FINAL EXAM.		FIRST SEMESTER AVG.	FOURTH SIX WEEKS	FIFTH SIX WEEKS	SIXTH SIX WEEKS	SECOND SEM. FINAL EXAM		SECOND SEMESTER AVG.
				FIRST SEM.	FINAL EXAM.					SECOND SEM.	FINAL EXAM	
English II	C	C+	C+	C-	C-	C	D+	C	D	C	✓	C
Civics	D	B+	B	B	C	C	C	C+	B-	C+		C+
History II	C	B	B	B	B	C	B	C+	C-	C+		C+
Physical	D	B	B	C	C	B	C	D	-	C		C
Health	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
PERSONAL CONF.	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CITIZENSHIP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DAYS ABSENT	0 1/2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
TIMES TARDY	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HONOR ROLL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GILT EDGE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

GRADES IN RED SIGNIFY FAILURES

GRADING SCALE AND INTERPRETATION

Numerical	Letter	Grade Points	Description
95-100	A	5	Excellent
85-94	B	4	Very Good
75-84	C	3	Average
(Sub-standard Passing Level)			
50-74	D	2	Below Average
Below 50	E	1	Unsatisfactory Pass
(Unconditional Failure)			
Below 50	F	0	Non-Promotional

GRADUATION STANDARDS

The Mission High School will graduate students under three standards as follows:

1. Students who have at least a "C" average on sixteen units, fifteen of which are affiliated and properly selected for college entrance, and who pass a comprehensive examination in English with a minimum grade of 80 are standard graduates and are entitled to an unqualified transcript of credit and recommendation to college.

2. Students who fall below a "C" average and/or fail to select courses properly for college entrance and/or fail to pass the special examination in English but who have at least a "D" average on sixteen units may elect to be graduated with the understanding that the transcript of credit if called for will NOT carry a recommendation to college grade work and that colleges will have a right to deny unconditional entrance.

3. Students who fall below the standards as set forth in No. 1 or No. 2 above but who make at least an "E" average on sixteen units may elect to be graduated on a purely local graduation basis and with the distinct understanding that no transcript of credit or recommendation to college will ever be asked for until the standing of the student is raised sufficiently. In effect this graduation is simply an indication of time put in and a reward for persistence in maintaining beneficial contacts with teachers, other students, and the general school program.

NOTE: The graduation ceremony and the diploma itself is the same for all types of graduates. The distinctions are on the permanent records of the school and are not revealed publicly or made a source of embarrassment or limitation to the individual.

Sub-standard graduates always have the privilege of raising their standing by repeating courses in which they are deficient.

The above graduation policy makes the Mission High School serve both as a finishing school and a college preparatory school. It permits a greater recognition of individual differences.

Joaquin attended Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School from 1926-1933 and Mission High School from 1933-1937. Lastly, he attended Edinburg Jr. College 1938-1940 and graduated with an Associate degree. On the previous page you will see a report card from his senior year in High School. As you can see from the grades, Joaquin was an average student with plenty of other activities to keep him busy outside of school. My uncle “Tony” (Othon Guerrero Jr.) was gracious enough to disclose what he remembers of Joaquin. Though a boy himself of about 11 years of age (6th grade) and Joaquin was a senior in High School, my uncle Tony stated that Joaquin was a well liked young man. He always had a bunch of friends over his house sitting around the porch eating Oatmeal cookies and drinking Kool-Aid on hot summer days. He was also devoted to his Catholic faith, as it will be apparent in some of his journal entries. However, he developed local reputation for being very fast on his feet. In fact, so fast his friends nicknamed him “La Zorra” (The Fox). He was able to exploit this speed in sports. The word is that he was a track star in High School and Jr. College and was able to share his gift by being an assistant track coach in High School for one year. Its been said he enjoyed football; in fact, he fractured his left clavicle (junction middle and outer third according to a physical report) in 1937 and was unconscious 2 to 3 times for about a minute each time. You really have to love a sport to put up with this much abuse. However, Baseball was his passion. He played center field and was very good at it as my Uncle Tony recalls. In fact, so good that he was on a Semi-pro team called the 30-30’s pictured below.



Joaquin is kneeling (fourth man from L to R)

I do not know how he did the season this photo was taken, yet it is proof enough that the man was athletically talented although, his talent did not end on the field. His excellences in sports were also portrayed in any task he undertook or was given to him. Joaquin took life head on. No task was too small or too big. He, like any other person during this period, did what he could do to better himself as a person and of course financially for himself and his family. As a person he recognized, and I am sure experienced, the animosity and discrimination towards Hispanics in general. Thus, he explored any avenue he could to prove his worth by reading current magazines like Popular Mechanics to obtain information of the latest technology and weather because he had a dream of flying and airplane one day. To fulfill this dream he mowed lawns, ran errands for people, and even did wood work with his dad.

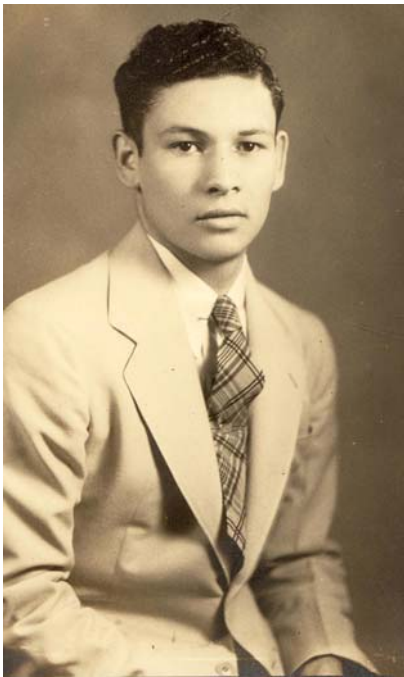


Photo on the left is from unknown year. (Looks like Our Lady of Guadalupe School graduation) Right photo is Graduation picture from Edinburg Jr. College in 1940

Woodworking was a hobby that was mentioned on his military application. Yet, he did not stop there. Joaquin also drove a school bus. His brother Othon owned two school buses that would shuttle student to and from there destinations. The route Joaquin was put in charge of was the shuttle from Mission to Edinburg Jr. Collage.



Joaquin with 6-year-old Joann Cuthen and 10-year-old sister Wynonna (Spring 1939)

This job paid, in part, his tuition for Junior College. At the end of the day, he would take the bus home and park it there for the next day. The bus could not travel more than 35 mph at any given time or it would overheat. I can only imagine how uncomfortable it got inside the vehicle, while driving, on a hot summer day. Despite the conditions, Joaquin enjoyed his work and most of all to help people any way that he could. Joann Cuthen (now Joann Gibson) shared one story that portrays the goodness of Joaquin's heart. She recalls being in first grade (six years old) and having to travel on foot about ½ mile to the school bus stop. While walking to the bus stop with her older sister Wynona (age 10 - picture on page 15), they had to pass in front of a property that had a large Bulldog that would constantly bark at them in a threatening manner. They reported this to their father; which in turn reported it to the Mission School district. He wanted to request that the bus, driven by Joaquin, stop in front of his house to pick up the girls to avoid the dog. The district denied his request even though the bus would pass literally pass in front of their home on its way to the school bus stop. Joaquin found out about the humble request being denied and made an effort to devise an alternate plan. Joaquin's plan was to stop the bus on his way to the first bus stop, turn the park brake on and grab a broom to sweep the floor of the bus before his first passengers came aboard. It just so happened that he stopped the bus right in front of the Cuthen's house to maintain the vehicle. After he attended to his morning routine, he just happen to see and accommodate his first two passengers and offered them a ride to the bus stop and eventually to school.

No job was too menial for this man. A much respected law firm, Strickland, Ewers and Wilkins, also employed him as a janitor during High School and Jr. College. When he was finished with his bus routes, he would go to the law firm to do the cleaning. It was during this time that my Uncle Tony would tag along to help him clean. While Joaquin cleaned, he mingled with the law partners and staff members. Joaquin particularly enjoyed

conversing with Mr. Ewers. They developed a mutual admiration and respect of each other. Mr. Ewers took Joaquin under his wing because he recognized the strong work ethics Joaquin had established for himself. Mr. Ewers was a man to be respected. In fact, it was his law firm that prevented big chains like Sears and JC Penny's from coming into town because they wanted to keep commerce within the town of Mission and not allow these companies to come in and wipe out the small business man. When the opportunity was available, Joaquin inquired as to what it took to set up for a case in court. It was through this interaction and recognizing Joaquin's genuine interest that opened the door to learn a skill of writing shorthand to transcribe court cases. Joaquin learned quickly and performed so well, that they hired him to be their stenographer. His salary was ten dollars a week.

Though busy driving a bus, attending college and now working as a stenographer, Joaquin's dream to fly was still not a reality. After graduating from Junior College on May of 1940, he attended Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) classes, during that summer, to pursue his dream and eventually get his pilot license. To defray the cost of this particular course he performed maintenance on the airplanes at the local hanger, on his own time, so he could get closer to his dream. I do not know of one person today that could juggle the numerous activities this man put upon himself and still be as successful as he was! So as months went by the day came for Joaquin to solo. He invited Mr. Ewers and the rest of the staff, family and friends to this special event. In fact, Mr. Ewers closed shop, for the day, to allow everyone in the office to attend the event. There were many very proud people that day but, none more proud than Joaquin himself. After his solo, he landed and embraced all of his supporters. In his excitement, he asked his brother Othon to fly with him and my Grandfather responded in Spanish with a small grin, "ESTAS PENDEJO!" (a profane way of saying you're crazy). My grandfather was known for always using such "colorful" vocabulary and Joaquin knew this to be so and did not to take it as an insult. In fact it was a form of vulgar comedy. For example, when my grandfather Othon purchased a third bus Vicente, granddad's brother, joined the group. Vicente, a joker himself, suggested one Friday afternoon that when the last passenger was dropped off from all three brother's buses that they would meet at a certain intersection and the last person there was going to buy the beers. It turned out Vicente himself was the last one to the intersection. My grandfather and Joaquin had big smiles on their faces and Vicente was forced to put one on his face because the chosen intersection was busy with people of the community and all three men were very well know. Forced to paint a smile on his face Vicente gritted his teeth and lipped the vulgarity "Chinga tu Madre" (a very vulgar expression among Hispanics towards Mothers). Both men read his lips and burst into laughter! My grandfather graciously returned the gesture by gritting his teeth with a smile and returned

with “Chinga la tuya” (vulgarity returned to his Mother). The humor in this was that all three men had the same Mother. Despite their crude ways, the three men genuinely loved and respected each other.

After the solo flight, Mr. Ewers greeted him with a large smile, a firm handshake and quite possible with a hug to congratulate Joaquin on his accomplishment. Yet, Mr. Ewers was always thinking ahead as any mentor would. When the celebration settled, a time came when Mr. Ewers was able to ask Joaquin a very important question. The question was, “Now that you have your pilot’s license what is next in your future?” Though proud of Joaquin’s accomplishment, he knew that this great accomplishment might not be enough to secure Joaquin’s future. Therefore, Mr. Ewers advised him to consider joining the military during peacetime to improve his flying skills and to be able to place military experience, as a pilot and officer, on his resume. Mr. Ewers was confident that this would allow Joaquin to secure a respectful place in life despite the animosity. Joaquin always listened very carefully to what Mr. Ewers had to say. Joaquin responded positively to Mr. Ewer’s suggestion because he saw him as not only his employer but also his mentor and even as a second father. Mr. Ewers would not give out good advice just to anyone. Mr. Ewers was a man that would not waste his time on people that were not willing to help themselves become productive citizens of the community. Thus, he recognized that Joaquin had not met his full potential and needed to proceed to the next level in his life.

Subsequently, Joaquin began the adventure to the next level of his life by filling out an application for an appointment as a Flying Cadet. Mr. Ewers’ intentions were for Joaquin to go in, get the job done, and walk out with the experience needed to start his life and have numerous opportunities for secure employment and most importantly his future. His future would include his High School sweetheart, Librada (Libby) Gertrudes Cavazos, in holy matrimony.

All was going according to plan, until Sunday, December 7, 1941. A day that will live in infamy. The bombing of Pearl Harbor changed everyone’s plans. Plans of matrimony with Libby would have to be put on hold.

Libby stayed a very faithful girlfriend throughout Joaquin’s tour in the Pacific. They were able to get together a few times during the war and were able to re-enforce their friendship and love for each other. Unfortunately, the dream of matrimony slipped away when Joaquin was reported, for the second time, MIA (Missing in Action). Libby kept the faith and prayed that he would be found again just like the first time. However, this did not happen. Approximately, one year after Joaquin was reported MIA, Libby was killed in a bus crash in Mexico while on her way to visit family in Monterrey. One year and a half after Libby’s death the U.S. Army declared 1st Lt. Joaquin Castro presumed dead.

I know deep in my heart and my faith in God and in his son Jesus Christ that Joaquin and Libby are together in the Lord's kingdom living the life of love, peace and tranquility with each other for eternity. God Bless Joaquin and Libby.



Libby on left but Joaquin would refer to her as Gertrudes in his journals.



Joaquin in High School Graduation gowned with Gertrudes.



Training in the Air Corp

The information provided here are of Joaquin Castro's personal accountings from his journal, his photos, and his flight log entries. Included are references from the documents that survived the catastrophic fire at the St. Louis Military Personnel Office on July of 1973. In addition, internet discoveries, forum information, various reference articles and books, contacts with historian and relatives of fallen Heroes supplemented this biography.

A goal Joaquin set for himself, according to a newspaper article, was to write a book after the war. He even had a title already picked out. You guessed it. It was "Living On and Under the Wing". I have borrowed it to keep this dream alive. As additional information becomes available, future revisions will be necessary to keep this piece of history as accurate as possible. Let us begin:

(Most of the information is written as it appears in documents)

July 2, 1940

It was on this date that Joaquin received word from Special Order #94 (S.O. #94) from Headquarters (office of the Commanding Officer) at Randolph Field, Texas of four officers that were appointed to the selection board for new Flying Cadets.

September 9, 1940

Joaquin received S.O. # 145 from Headquarter stating the addition of another officer to the selection board.

October 31, 1940

Joaquin typed a letter to the Commanding Officer of the Eighth Corp area at Fort Sam Houston, Texas stating the following:

Dear Sir,

I am referring you to item number eight in the affidavits. It was due to a slight illness that I was unable to finish the program outlined under C.P.T. work before September 15. However, while my application is in The process of consideration, I intend to buy as many flying hours as my Financial means permit me. If for any reason, I am not accepted as a Candidate for flying cadet I would like very much to join some other branch of the air service for the next three years.

Very truly yours,
Joaquin Castro

Footnote: Here is a perfect example of a man doing what it took to obtain his goal even if involved spending what little money he had.

November 1, 1940

The "Application for Appointment" as a Flying Cadet along with Affidavit was received and completed at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio Texas Eight Corp area. He was 24 years of age and his height was 5'8 ½ " tall and weighed 155 lbs with Brown eyes, Black hair and a Ruddy complexion. The schools he attended were listed along with completion dates. He attended the C.M.T.C Summer training at Camp Bullis in San Antonio in 1937 and was recommended for the "Red Course". Additional comments were recorded as having 32 ½ hours of C.P.T flying time but due to limited time, he was unable to finish allotted hours before the deadline of September 15.

November 2, 1940

Joaquin received a memo granting him the opportunity to undergo examination for Flying Cadet Training from the President of the Flying Cadet Examination Board at Randolph Texas.

November 18, 1940

Joaquin was given the 64 physical examination in connection with his application for appointment as Flying Cadet. His height and weight were recorded as 5' 8" and 146 lbs. All other physical features, such as eyes, ears and lungs, were all normal except for a fractured left clavicle he got in 1937 but had healed nicely. He had blood type "O".

November 19, 1940

Findings and Recommendations from the Board:

The Board proceeded to examine Mr. Castro. He produced documentary evidence to the effect that he has graduated from the Edinburg Jr. Collage, Edinburg, Texas, and is therefore exempt from the written educational examination. He also presented satisfactory evidence of the date of his birth, which is appended hereto. He passed the physical examination successfully. The Board believes that Mr. Castro's moral character and general fitness meet the standard prescribed for appointment, and recommends that he be appointed a Flying Cadet. Mr. Castro has had 22 hours dual flying instruction, and he has 10 hours solo flying time to his credit. He was also asked to sign a document certifying that he has never been previously discharged from U.S. Army Air Corps Training Center, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps. Or the U.S. Coast Guard Flying Schools, for failure in flying training, rendering him ineligible to make application for Flying Cadet appointment.

March 12, 1941

Joaquin enlisted into the Army at Fort Brown, Texas with Serial #18022986 and was to be sent to the Air Corp as a Flying Cadet to the Allan Hancock College of Aeronautics in Santa Maria, California. He also received his Oath and certificate of Enlistment.

March 13, 1941

On this day, Joaquin signed a statement that committed him to the following:

1. To enlist for three (3) years as a flying cadet of the Air Corps with the understanding that upon completion of the course of instruction at the Air Corps. Training Center, which normally requires 1 year, I will be discharged a flying cadet.
2. To remain unmarried during the period of training as a flying cadet.
3. To serve three (3) years as a second Lieutenant, Air Corps Reserve, on active duty, unless sooner relieved by competent authority.

Then he was sent to California for basic Ground School Training.

March 17, 1941

He received a Final Grade sheet from the Air Corps Training Detachment (ACTD) in Santa Maria, California. The following are grades and remarks:

Class 41-H Class #1 Flight Duty

<u>Flying Time</u>	<u>Final Flying Grade</u>
PT	By two instructors was a "D"
Dual 34:00	(a "D" meant Satisfactory- up to minimum standards.) { A-Superior, B-Excellent, C-Very Satisfactory, E- Unsatisfactory, F-Inferior (danger to himself and others)}
Solo 26:00	
Total 60:00	
Dual before Solo 8:13	

Ground School Grades:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Grades</u>
Airplane Eng. Theory*	8*	80*
Airplane Eng. Lab*	26*	*combined grade*
Air Navigation	30	76
Airplanes	14	86
Maps	12	79
Meteorology	20	79
Theory of Flight	10	68
Mathematics	20	No Grade
Military Courtesy	1	No Grade

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Grades</u>
Military Hygiene	4	No Grade
Inf. Drill	24	No Grade
	General Average	79

Remarks: Satisfactorily completed the prescribed course of elementary training at this school.

Disposition: Transferred to A.C. Basic Flying School, Moffett Field, Calif.

Footnote: It should be noted here that Joaquin flew what is called a PT-17 Stearman while at this school particular school. Made by Boeing, it had a 7 cylinder radial air-cooled, 220 hp engine, wingspan measured 32' 2" (9.80m), length 25' (7.63m), height 9'2" (2.79m), weight 2'717lb. (1,223 kg), max speed 124 mph (199 km/h), ceiling 11,200' (3,415 m), and had a range of 505 miles (812 km).



Flight line at Santa Maria California (top) Joaquin next to his Pt-17 Stearman at Santa Maria



Other photos taken by Joaquin from Santa Maria March 1941 Class 41H



With his permission my friend Paolo, from Italy is flying his Stearman from Randolph AFB, Texas from the year 1942

March 18, 1941- ACTD, Santa Maria California- Acute pharyngitis, mild duty.

May 5, 1941- ACTD, S.M Cal.- Nasopharyngitis, acute, slight duty N.I.F.

May 10, 1941-Nasopharyngitis, acute, slight duty, N.I.F.

May 11, 1941- Nasopharyngitis, acute, slight duty, N.I.F.

May 12, 1941- Nasopharyngitis, acute, return to full duty.

Footnote: It is bound to happen. Illnesses are a part of our being. With the stresses Joaquin underwent to complete each task given him, it is not difficult to understand the effect it had on his immune system. Subsequently, when his defenses were down, he picked up a bug. Luckily, it was not an illness that delayed his training too much.

June 2, 1941

He received final Grade from Air Corps Basic Flying School in Moffett Field, California. The following are his grades and remarks.

Class 41 H Class 1 Flight Duty

<u>Flying Time</u>			<u>Final Flying Grade</u>	
	PT	BT	Total	by four instructors
Dual	34:00	27:05	61:05	“D”, “D”, “C”, and “C”
Solo	26:00	43:15	69:15	Final Flying grade- “C”
Total	60:00	70:20	130:20	Very Satisfactory

Ground School Grades

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Airplane Engines	20	78
Military Courtesy		77.5
Military Law	10	79
Meteorology	30	87
Radio Code	30	8wpm
Radio Communication	5	Passed
Air Navigation	15	88
	Gen. Final Grade	81.5

Remarks: Satisfactorily completed the prescribed course of instruction at the Air Corps Basic Flying School, this location.

Disposition: Transferred to the Advanced Flying School, Phoenix, Arizona August 16, 1941.

Footnote: During training at this particular school, Joaquin primarily trained on a BT-13 Valiant. It was more than likely a BT-13A since this was the type the USAAF used in 1940. The Navy used the BT-13. Vultee Aircraft Inc. built it in 1940 as a trainer type. Its specifications were a Pratt & Whitney R-985-AN-1 9 cylinder radial air-cooled engine with 450 hp. Its wing span was 42' 2" (12.86 m) long with a length of 28' 9" (8.76 m), a height of 12' 5" (3.75 m), a weight of 4,360 lbs. (1,980 kg), a maximum speed of 166 mph (295 km/h), a ceiling of 16,500 ft. (5,030 m) and a range of 516 miles (826 km).



*Joaquin next to BT-13A Valiant May of 1941
Moffet Field California*



*Unknown Cadet in BT-13Valiant May1941
Moffet Field California*



Unknown Cadet May of 41



B-13 Valiant (Bib #1)

June 5, 1941

He received another full and complete physical at Moffett Field, California. All was normal.

June 17, 1941

He received a memo informing him of the seven officers in charge of the Advanced Flying School at the West Coast Air Corps Training Center at Luke Field in Phoenix, Arizona.

June 27, 1941

He contracted mild case of Trichophytosis corporis bilaterally on his feet. How, when or where is unknown. This is a common condition known as ringworm. He was treated at Station Hospital at Moffett Field.

August 20, 1941

Diagnosed with acute Nasopharyngitis catarrhal (known as common cold) that was moderately severe with cause undetermined. Treatment in Quarters from 8/20 to 8/25. To report to duty on the 8/25, orders from station hospital at Luke Field Phoenix Arizona.

August 29, 1941

Yet another complete physical was performed and all is well at Luke Field.

September 11, 1941

A letter was typed up from Proceedings of the Faculty Board of AIR CORPS ADVANCED FLYING SCHOOL West Coast Air Corps Training Center Luke Field, Phoenix, Arizona in the case of CLASS No. 41-H:

The Board met on September 11, 1941; all members being present; The Board recommends: That the following named Aviation Cadets of Class 41-H, who were considered by the Board, be appointed Second Lieutenants in the Air Corps Reserve, with the aeronautical rating of "Pilot", effective upon graduation. Joaquin's name then appeared in a list of 124 eligible cadets.

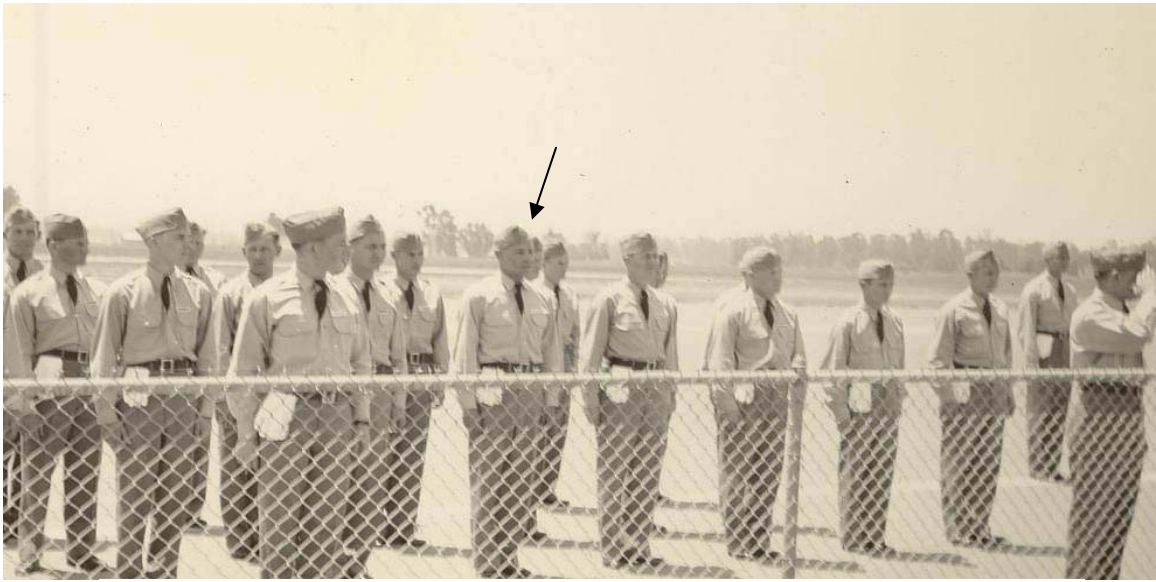
October 1, 1941

Another letter was typed by the War Department: Office of the Chief of the Air Corps Washington D.C.

Subject: Commission in Air Corps Reserve for Army Aviation Cadet Graduates. To the Adjutant General.

Board Proceedings and other pertinent papers for the following named aviation cadets, who are scheduled to complete their course in heavier-than-air flying at the Advanced Flying School, Luke Field, Phoenix, Arizona, October 31, 1941, are forwarded herewith, recommending that these aviation cadets be appointed in the Air Corps Reserve in the grade of Second Lieutenant.

Footnote: Ground School classes, flight training and PT (physical training) were probably a daily routine. However, being part of the military meant one had to learn Military etiquette as well. Falling out in formation and marching were rituals they had to perform regularly, hence the examples below.



In Formation Class 41-H Luke Field Phoenix Arizona



Joaquin Marching the Line at Luke field and with an unknown Cadet at Moffett.



Picture thou slightly out of focus shows AT-6 Texan trainers were used at Luke Field



Unknown classmates from Class 41-H at Advanced Flight School at Luke Field Phoenix Arizona

Footnote: In addition, I am confident that living quarters were not the "Ritz". However, they probably did not live in squalor either. I have evidence from Hal Hall's biography on his brother, Major Earl Hall, that living conditions at basic flight school were in tents. I do not have evidence that this existed in Santa Maria California during Joaquin's training yet, it is a very good possibility. However, below you will see examples of the living conditions at the Advanced Flight School at Luke Field. I can not imagine that the beds below were very comfortable however, they were probably better than sleeping on cots in a tent if that were the case in Santa Maria during Basic Flight training.



*A closer view of the 2nd photo reveals Joaquin on his bed recovering from an illness.
(8/20-8/25 of 1941 in his Barracks)*

October 30, 1941

Special Orders (S.O.) #125

From Headquarter Air Corps Advanced Flying School (ACAFS) Luke Field,
Phoenix, Arizona:

1. By direction of the President, and under the provisions of Public Resolution No. 18, 76th Congress, April 3, 1941, and under the provisions of paragraph 4, Personnel Orders No. 256, dated October 31, 1942, each of the following named Aviation Cadets, now at Luke Field, Phoenix, Arizona, upon acceptance of this appointment as Second Lieutenant, Air Corps Reserve, is, with his consent, ordered to extended active duty at Luke Field, Phoenix, Arizona, for a period of one year, effective November 1, 1941. Each officer will rank from November 1, 1941. *(124 men listed)*

Castro, Joaquin 0-428914 (OFF.ASN) 18022986 (ENL.ASN) 527 W. 7th St. Mission, Texas.

Unless sooner relieved each officer will be relieved so as to permit him to arrive at his home on October 31, 1942, on which date he will revert to an inactive status.

2. In compliance with instructions contained in Immediate Action War Department Letter, Office of the Chief of the Air Corps, Washington, D.C., Subject: Radio Orders, TO” The Adjutant General, dated October 21, 1941, File AG 210-313 Air-Res. (10-18-41) RO, the following –named officers having accepted commissions at this station as Second Lieutenants, Air Corps Reserve, are assigned to Post Headquarters, Air Corps Advanced Flying School, Luke Field, Phoenix, Arizona, pending issuance of orders transferring them to the Hawaiian Department, and will report to the Director of Training for duty.

Second Lieutenant Joaquin Castro, 0-428914, Air Corps.

October 31, 1941

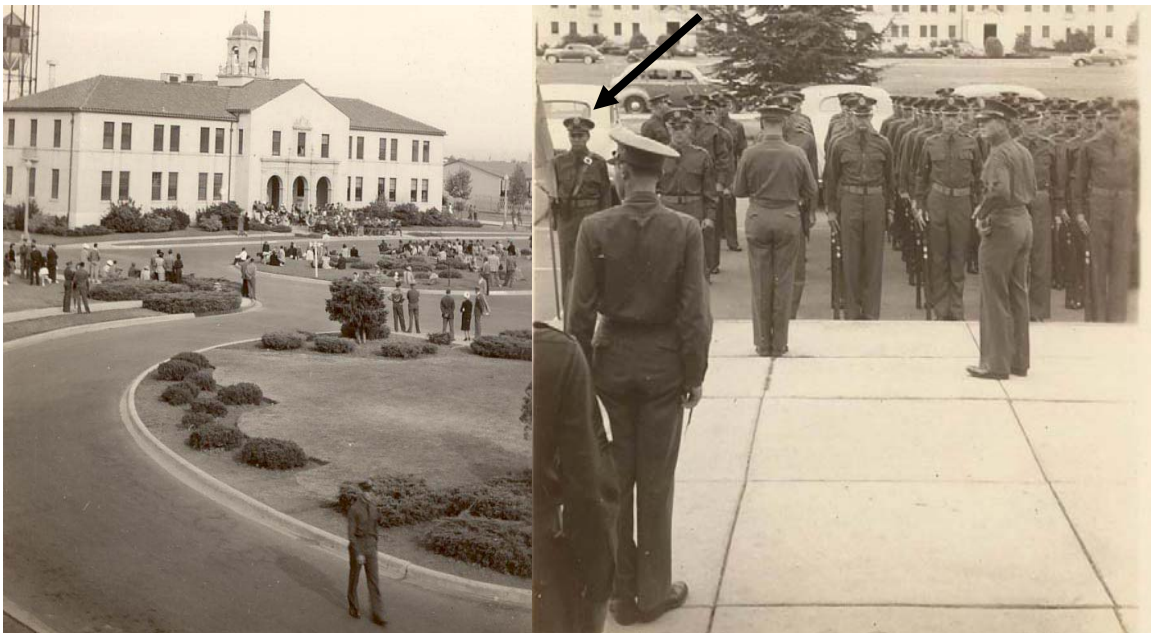
Personnel Orders (P.O.) #256

From War Department Office of the Chief of the Air Corps Washington

The following-named Second Lieutenants of the Air Corps Reserve, having qualified under the provisions of Army Regulations 95-60, War Department, 1941, and paragraph 3 c (1), Air Corps Circular 50-10, dated June 30, 1941, are rated PILOTS, effective this date: *(124 men listed)*

Joaquin Castro.

Footnote: This concludes his steps through training. What a major accomplishment from a man with humble roots. Yet, let this serve as a reminder that it is not where you came from that defines a person but where you plan to go. As a result, his service record indicated endorsement remarks of having an “EXCELLENT” character and “SATISFACTORY” rating for soldiering. Graduation day from advanced flight school must have been as proud a moment as his prior graduations from Jr. Collage, High School and even grade school. This will embark a new adventure in his young life. One that he was very eager to see for himself and experience what life really had to offer. However, the plan was to get his wings and 3 years of military life, before he could make a life for himself and any future Mrs. Castro. History tells the tale of a different plan. Below are photos of the graduation ceremony at Luke Field Arizona.

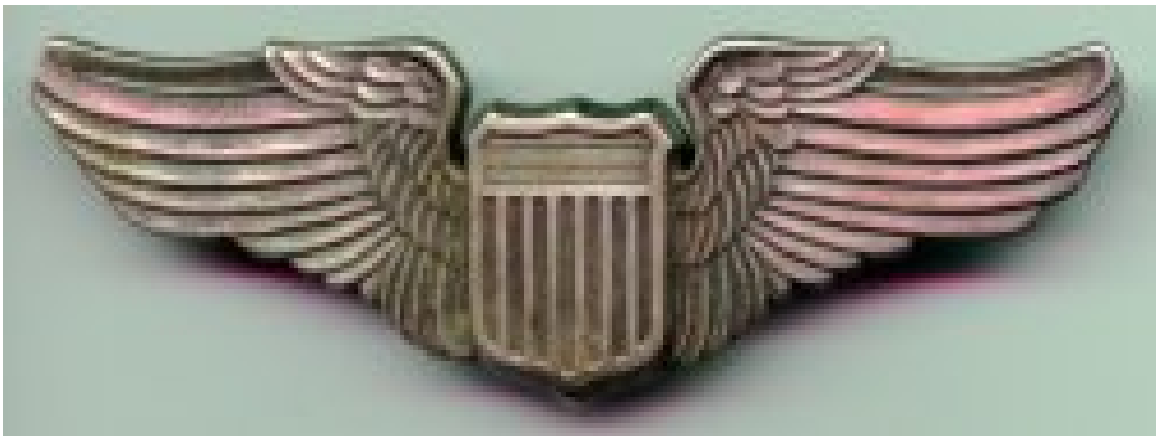


Graduation Day for Class 41-H on October 31, 1941. Joaquin earned his “Wings”

Footnote: The primary aircraft flown at the Advanced Flight School at Luke Field Phoenix, Arizona was the North American AT-6A TEXAN. North American Aviation Inc. built it in 1941. It has a Pratt and Whitney R-1340-49 Wasp, 9-cylinder radial, air-cooled, 600 hp engine. It has a wingspan of 42 ft. (12.80 m); length of 29 ft. (8.84 m); height of 11’ 9” (3.55 m); a weight of 5,300 lbs. (2,404 kg); a maximum speed of 208 mph (335 km/h), a ceiling of 24,200 ft. (7,325 m) and a range of 750 miles (1,205 km). It was equipped with two machine guns.



AT-6A Texan (Bib #2)



Pilot Wings courtesy of Bob Schwartz (Bib. #3)

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



To all who shall see these presents, greeting:
Know Ye, that reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity
and abilities of Joaquin Castro
I do appoint him Second Lieutenant, Air Corps in the

Army of the United States

such appointment to date from the thirty-first day of October
nineteen hundred and forty-one. He is therefore, carefully and diligently to
discharge the duty of the office to which he is appointed, by doing and performing all
manner of things thereunto belonging.

He will enter upon active duty under this commission only when specifically
ordered to such active duty by competent authority.
And I do strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers under his command
when he shall be employed on active duty, to be obedient to his orders as an officer of his
grade and position. And he is to observe and follow such orders and directions from time
to time, as he shall receive from me, or the future President of the United States of
America, or the General or other Superior Officers set over him, according to the rules
and discipline of War.

This Commission evidences an appointment in the Army of the United States, under
the provisions of section 37, National Defense Act, as amended, and is to continue in
force for a period of five years from the date above specified, and during the pleasure
of the President of the United States, for the time being.

Done at the City of Washington, this thirty-first day of October
in the year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and forty-one, and of the
Independence of the United States of America, the one hundred and sixty-sixth.

By the President:

File-10-7-41
EAB-4634

M. T. Williamson
Adjutant General.

Hawaii Here I Come

As was noted previously, Joaquin accepted his commission and initial assignment. After graduation, he was probably given some time off to go home, get some well-deserved R&R, and tie up any loose ends at home. His records indicate that he received his orders to ship out and report to Hawaii. Specifically his personal file had a “Report of Change” punch card in it.

20	-306	225		008608	2	LT	0869	AC	15111	0-428914	CASTR
TYPE	STATION	TYPE ORG.	UNIT	PARENT UNIT	SPLST.	GRADE	DUTY	A. OR S.	DATE	SERIAL NUMBER	N. I.
REPORT OF CHANGE (FOR INDIVIDUAL OR UNIT)											
0-428914				2 Lt		AC		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASSIGNED <input type="checkbox"/> ATTACHED <input type="checkbox"/> ATTACHED - F <input type="checkbox"/> CASUAL			
SERIAL NUMBER				GRADE		SPLST.		BASIC STATUS			
Castro				Joaquin				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON DUTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY):			
LAST NAME				FIRST NAME		MIDDLE INITIAL		DUTY OR OTHER STATUS AT TIME OF THIS CHANGE			
86th Obser Sq								Lt Castro asgd fr Luke Field Phoenix Ariz			
ORGANIZATION WITH WHICH SERVED								DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE			
Hq Bellows Field								Comp ORG Race W			
ORGANIZATION OF HEADQUARTERS FROM WHICH RECALLED								Date of Rank 1 November 1941			
Bellows Field TH								Primary Duty 069			
LOCATION								12-42			
REPORT FOR THE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS ENDING AT 11:59 P.M.								SIGNATURE OF AUTHENTICATING OFFICER ALBERT D. CUMMINGS 1st Lieut. A. G. D. Adjutant GRADE AND TITLE			
DAY 15 MONTH November 1941								TYPE OF CHANGE STATION TYPE ORGANIZ'N SUB UNIT PARENT UNIT SPLST. GRADE DUTY ARM OR SERVICE			
50 0306 225 - - 008608								2 Lt 0869 AC 20			
DATE OF CHANGE				NAME		SERIAL NUMBER		STATION		TYPE ORG. OR SERVICE	
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80											

November 15, 1941

As you can see, he was assigned to the 86th Observation Squadron HQ Bellows Field at the Territory of Hawaii (TH). This Squadron was primarily a patrolling and mapping unit before the attack of Pearl Harbor. The planes used there were the B-12, O-47 and the O-49. Also stationed at Bellows was the 44th Pursuit Squadron that used the P-40's B & C variants.

B-12 Martin had a span of 70'6", length of 44'9", Height of 15'5", Weight of 12,980 lbs., Maximum speed of 212 mph, Cruise speed of 165 mph, Ceiling of 24,200 ft., Range of 1240 miles with bombs, (3) .30 cal machine guns and could carry 2,260 lbs. of bombs, (2) Pratt and Whiney R-1690-11 Hornet radials with 700 hp each, and could ferry 1830 miles without bombs.



Martin B-12 (Bib #4)



O-47 North American (Bib. #5)

O-47 NORTH AMERICAN has a span of 46'4", length of 33'3", Height of 13'9", max speed of 227 mph, cruise speed of 220 mph, ceiling of 24,100 ft., (1) forward .30 cal machine gun and (1) flexible rear .30 cal machine gun, and a Wright R-1820 1,060 hp engine.



O-49 Stinson Vigilant (Bib. #5)

O-49 Stinson Vigilant with a span of 50'11", length of 34'3", height of 9'10", weight of 3,385 lbs., max speed of 122 mph and a cruise speed of 109 mph, ceiling of 18,000 ft., range of 280 miles, and an Lycoming R-680 295 hp engine.



Curtis P-40 War Hawk (Bib. #6)

P-40 Curtis had a span of 37'4", length of 31'9", height of 12'4", weight of 9,100 lbs. fully loaded, max speed of 362 mph and a cruise speed of 235 mph, range of 850 miles, ceiling of 30,000 ft., (6) .50 cal machine guns, could carry 700lbs of bombs externally and had a Allison V-1710 engine with 1,150 hp.

Footnote: There are no official records of Joaquin flying either of the first 3 ships assigned to the 86th however, I am confident that when he arrived he was put to work and the B-12 or the O-47 would have been a step up from flying the AT-6A Texan.

Below are photos of Joaquin's arrival to Hawaii. Aloha Tower on the left and unknown officers on the right.



Aloha Tower Nov. 1941



Unknown Officers



11th Bomber Group (Bib. #7)



7th Air Force Army Air Corp (Bib.#8)

November 21, 1941

Received another “Record of Change” card that stated:

From 42nd Bomb Sq. (H) Hickam Field TH

2nd Lt. Joaquin Castro appointed assistant Squadron Engineer Officer (Primary Duty) as of 21 Nov. 41.

November 26, 1941

Received “Report of Change” card stating:

86th Observer Squadron HQ Bellows Field TH

2nd Lt. Joaquin Castro is relieved from assignment and assigned to 18th Bomb Wing AC Hickam Field TH.

Footnote: The 18th Bomb wing was composed of the 5th and 11 (Heavy) Bomber Groups and various squadrons like: 14th Reconnaissance Heavy (B-17 B-18), 19th Transport (C-33), 23rd, 26th, 31st, 42nd, 50th, 72nd, 431st (all heavy and flew B-17 or B-18's) and 58th (light A-20). I figure this made it official that he was now assigned to the 42nd Squadron of the 11th Bomber Group and no longer part of the 86th hence the “Record of Change” (ROC) he receive on the 21st of November. The motto of the 11th Bomber Group was: “Progressio Sine Timore Aut Praejudicio” – “Progress without Fear or Prejudice. The Symbol of the 42nd Squadron was a panther and was part of the 7th Air Force at the time.

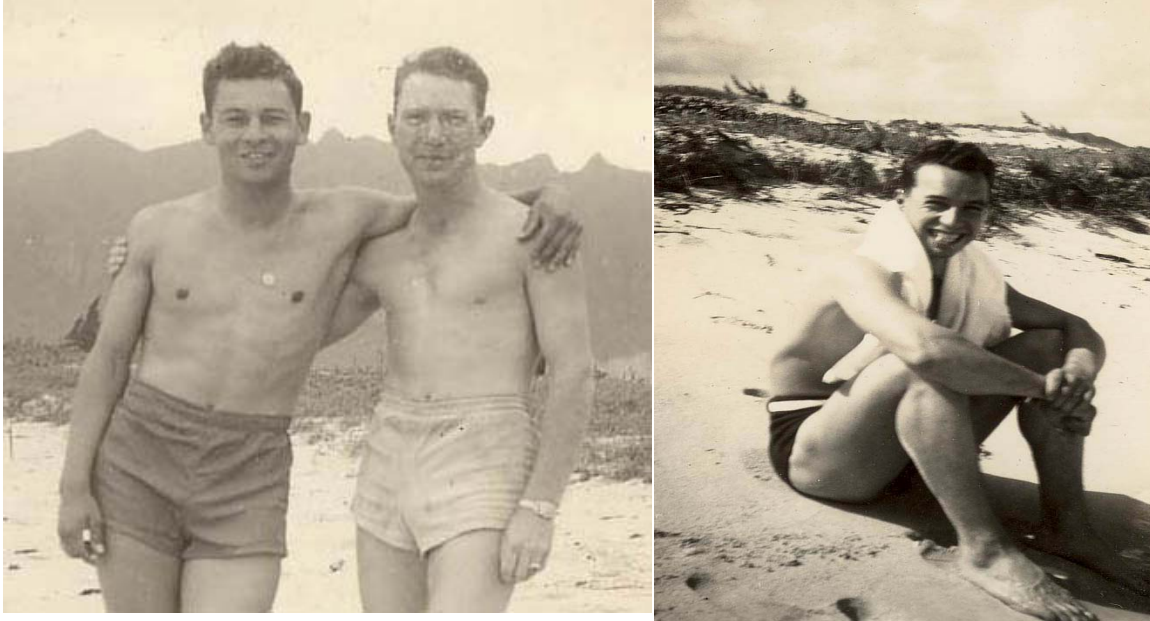


Army Air Corp patch



Hawaiian General Headquarters

It is said that all work and no play can make Jack, I mean Joaquin, a dull boy. Bellows AFB offered a nearby beach to allow the men to enjoy a tropical vacation away from the office. They probably were there, or any other beach, as many times as duty would allow. Below are two photos taken on a beach near Bellows Field and Enchanted Lakes from Laikai Hillside near runway 21R and 18.



Sgt. Raymond (Bud) Heilman Jr. {friend from the 42nd Squadron} on Joaquin's left and unknown friend



Capt. Carl F. Wuertele from the 42nd Sq. and friend to Joaquin

Attack on Pearl Harbor

Life on the Island, to some degree, probably has gotten to be somewhat of a routine from attending classes to adding more time in the air. As history revealed the rising political tensions during this time, life went on as usual. Joaquin had his living quarters to establish. Below are photos of his living quarters at Bellows Field and Hickam.



Joaquin with unknown officer (bunk mate?) entering their barracks at Bellows Field



Living quarters at Hickam

Once his “home” was set up, he continued to carry out his duties. In addition to attending classes on various military subjects, he logged in more flying time on the B-18 and B-17.



Douglas B-18 Bolo (Bib. #9)

Footnote: It is noted in his personal flight logs that he flew the B-18 for a short time before flying the B-17. Douglas Aircraft Company built the B-18. It has two Wright R-1820-53 Cyclone 9 cylinder radial air-cooled engines with 1,000 hp each. Its wingspan is 89'6" (27.28 m), a length of 57'10" (17.63 m), a height of 15'2" (4.62 m), a weight of 27,672 lbs (12,552 kg), a max speed of 226 mph (364 km/h) at 10,000 ft. (3,050 m), a ceiling of 27,150 ft. (8,275 m), a range of 1,200 miles (1,931 km), an armament of 3 machine guns, a bomb load of 6,500 lbs (2,948 kg), and a crew of 6.

However, it was the B-17 Flying Fortress that he logged the most time with. He notes that he flew the “D” and “E” versions from May of 1942 to his last mission; however, he could have flown the “C” and “D” versions because they were available in small numbers even after the war and his official military record confirm further training and search missions in the months that followed the bombing of Pearl Harbor. However, it is Joaquin’s personal flight log that confirms he flew the B-17E most of the time while in training and in the Pacific campaign.



*B-17E Joaquin would have been in the co-pilot seat located on the right side of the cockpit.
(Bib #10)*



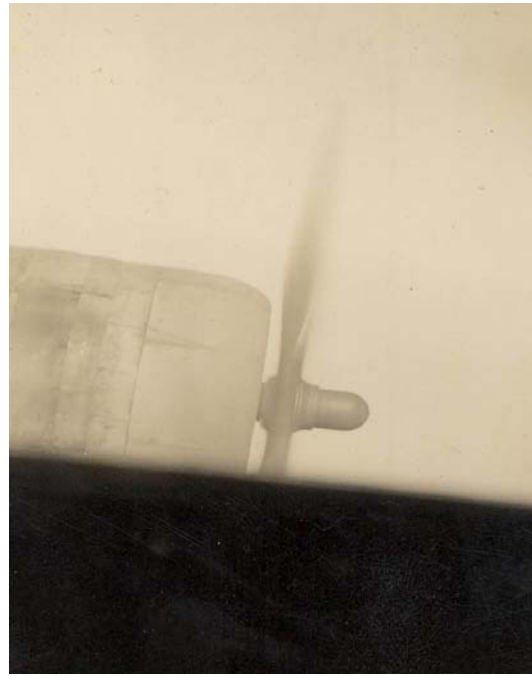
B-17E's in a standard formation on a bomb run. (Bib. #11)



The cockpit of the B-17G. One can appreciate why it took two to fly this machine. (Bib # 12)



Joaquin in the pilot seat



His view from the drivers seat

Footnote: Boeing Aircraft Company built the B-17E (Flying Fortress). It has four Wright R-1820-65 Cyclone 9-cylinder radial air-cooled 1,200 hp engines. It has a wing span of 103'9" (31.62 m), a length of 73'10" (22.50 m), a height of 19'2" (5.84 m), a weight of 53,000 lbs (24,040 kg) loaded, a max speed of 317 mph (510 km/h) at 25,000 ft. (7,620 m), a ceiling of 36,000ft. (11,150 m), a range of 3,000 miles (4,800 km), an armament of 10-13 machine guns, a bomb load of 17,600 lbs (7,985 kg) and a crew of 9.

Joaquin would take advantage of the leisure time by playing baseball, touring the island with his bike, swimming at a nearby beach, writing letters to family and friends or just sitting around reading letters from home.



Batter is up! (outside officers quarters)



Out for a stroll around Hickam AFB



Out for a swim near Bellows Field

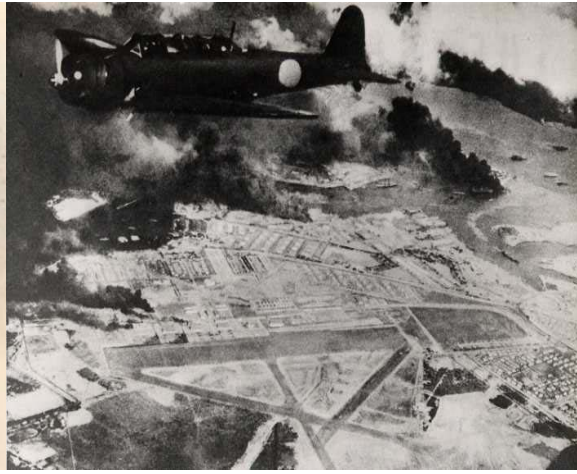


Unknown friends reading letters from home

The smiles on these men's faces would not last long. It was on December 7, 1941 that changed the lives of these brave men as well as all Americans. The feelings of contentment changed to emotions of shock, confusion, frustration and anger in a very short time. Most of the men were sleeping or on their way to the post chapels for Sunday service when suddenly at about 7:30 am they were awakened to this horrible sight:



Japanese Diver Bomber (Aichi D3A "Val") attacking
(Bib #13)



Nakajima B5N "Kate" delivered its torpedo on s
hip (Bib #14)



Battleship USS Arizona (BB-39) explodes killing about 1,200 men. (Bib. #15+16)



USS W. Virginia (BB-48) and Tennessee (BB-43) on fire.
(Bib #17)



Destroyer USS Shaw (DD-373) explodes.
(Bib #18)

When the attack was over and the fires settled the clean up began.



Destroyed B-17C near hanger #5 at Hickam (Bib #19)



Damaged P-40 at Bellows Field (Bib #20)



Destroyed P-40 at Wheeler (Bib 21)



B-17E landed at Hickam after attack with "C" or "D" version in background (Bib #22)



Pile of planes at Wheeler (Bib #23)



Pulling PBX sea plane out of fire zone (Bib #24)

The burial of brave men was also a task that needed attention. No soldier was forgotten and all were given a hero's funeral. The words of President Roosevelt state that on December 7th 1941, a date that shall live in infamy, will continue to echo from generation to generation. It is our responsibility to tell the story and to educate future generations of the sacrifices made.



Vollies fired over 15 Officers killed during attack at Kaneohn Naval Air Station (Bib. #25)

As tragic and horrifying as this day was, Joaquin did not sustain any injuries. However, twenty-nine members of his squadron were casualties. A paragraph on Joaquin's biography at the Castro Elementary web page states, *"the bombing and strafing of Hickam Field was an important objective, because the success of the Japanese attack on the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor was dependent on eliminating air opposition and preventing US planes from following their aircraft back to their carriers and bombing the task force. Castro was not injured, and in fact was able to get his B-17 off the ground and in the air where it would not be as easily attacked by the Japanese attack planes."* (Bib #26)

What a heroic act this was however when the dust settled the brutality of the attack revealed over 2,400 people dead. Approximately 3,000 people killed on the attack of the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001. This is the modern generation's Pearl Harbor. We must do what American did in 1941 to assure a victory over tyranny and evil. We must stand together as a nation under God and fight against this

injustice. We must honor our fallen fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters by upholding their dreams of freedom and make them ours. We owe it to them, we owe it to us and we owe it to our future. May God Bless America!



*The gravesite of 15 Officers at Kaneohn Naval Air Station visited one year later on December 7, 1942.
(Bib. #27)*



The Colors are presented to my Mom at my Dad's funeral. God Bless my Hero Lt. Arnoldo Guerrero Sr.

Preparing for War

Thus began the preparation for war. A very busy time for all involved. Resources indicate units moved around the island to re-group, organize and prepare an adequate defense for it was thought that the Japanese would mount another attack or landing soon. In addition, the Island of Wake was simultaneously attacked on December 7 and fell to enemy hands on December 26, 1941. Tension were very high, in fact, our own forces were shooting many of our own planes because they thought they were the enemy. Cooler heads eventually prevailed and a defense perimeter was established in relatively short period. I am confident that Joaquin, when given the opportunity, made some kind of contact to the folks at home to assure them that he was all right. Not much is known about Joaquin's specific duties until December 26, 1941 when he was reported missing (MIA) from a patrol mission.

December 26, 1941

From a Report of Change card:

Castro, Joaquin 2nd Lt 42nd bomb squadron (H) Hickam Field TH.

Duty to mission on patrol flight as of 26 Dec. 41.

December 27, 1941

A "Report of Mission" was filed.

Missing: In airplane since December 27, 1941 from the Hawaiian Department.

Information received from Colonel Ostrander.

TELEGRAM
OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

AG 201 CASTRO, JOAQUIN
(12-30-41)OG

DECEMBER 30 1941

MR CRISPIN CASTRO
527 WEST SEVENTH STREET
MISSION TEXAS

DEEPLY REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR SON SECOND LIEUTENANT JOAQUIN
CASTRO HAS BEEN REPORTED MISSING SINCE DECEMBER TWENTY SEVENTH STOP
LETTER FOLLOWS

ADAMS
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

1941 DEC

December 30, 1941

Report of Change card

From 42nd Bomb Sq. (H) Hickam Field TH.

For missing on Patrol flight to duty as of 30 Dec. 41.

January 1, 1942 (Happy New Year 1942!)

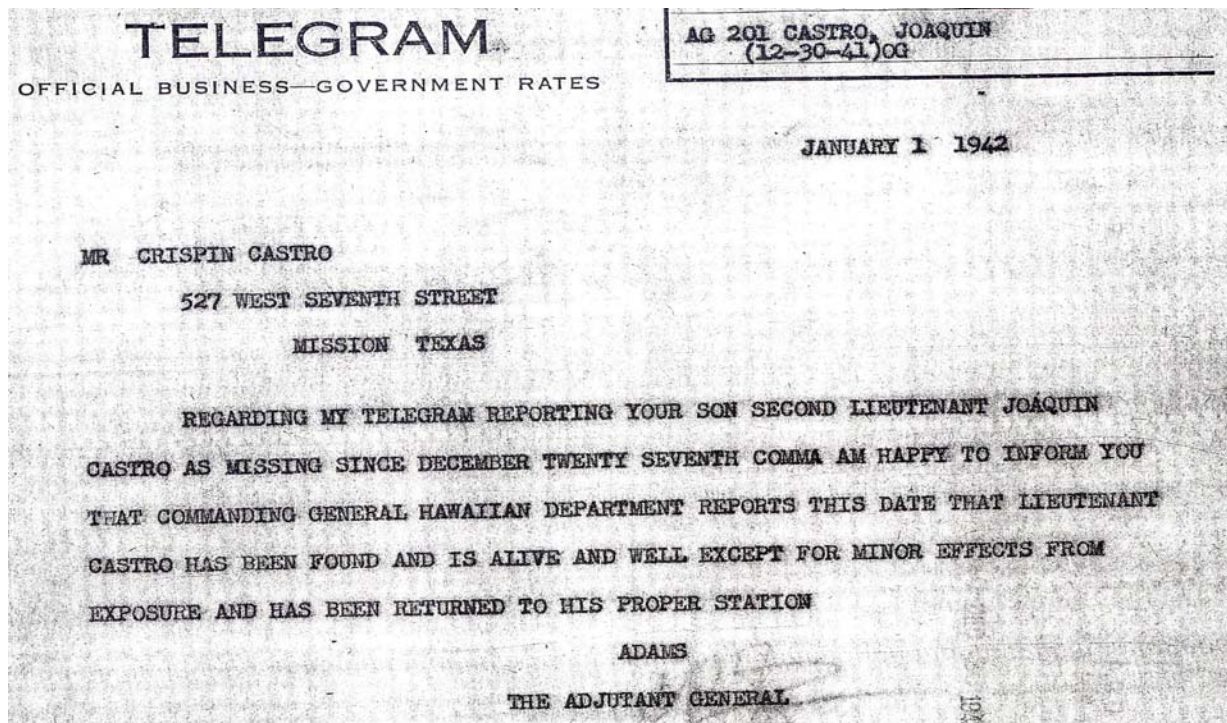
A "Supplementary Report of Mission Officer" issued.

Second Lieutenant Joaquin Castro (0-428914), AIR CORPS RESERVE.

HAS BEEN FOUND and returned to his station, SAFE AND WELL.

Per: Information received from Colonel Ostrander, 1-1-42.

Footnote: Second Telegram sent to his father in Mission Texas



Two books give more detail to the Dec. 26 mission. The first book, "Fortress Against the Sun" by Gene Eric Salecker and the second is, "Grey Geese Calling" by W.M. Cleveland. Both capture the essence of what happened that day but one seems to have a bit more detail than the other does. You be the judge:

Gene Eric Salecker's version:

On December 26, 16 B-17s went on search missions around Hawaii. Only 15 returned. Lt. Cooper, who had arrived at Hickam during the Japanese attack, and his crew were returning to Oahu late in the evening in B-17E (41-2402) when they got lost. "We flew about in blackness for hours", Cooper reported. "There was nothing on the horizon but sea and more sea." Finally running out of fuel, Cooper ditched the plane 40 miles

south of Kauai. “Suddenly the water was all around us and we were swimming away from the sinking plane,” he wrote. Scrambling into the two life rafts which were carried in special compartments on every B-17, the eight man crew floated around for three days and nights before being spotted by a Navy PBY flying boat. “None of us will ever forget it as long as we live,” Cooper stated. “It was like coming back from the dead. (Bib #28)



A PBY-7s on patrol (Bib #29)

Footnote: Consolidated Aircraft Corporation built the PBY Catalina. It has two Pratt and Whitney R-1830-82 Twin wasp 14 cylinders radial air-cooled 1,200 hp engines. Its wing span is 104' (31.70 m), a length of 63' 10" (19.45 m), a height of 20' 2" (6.14 m), it weights 35,420 lbs (16,066 kg), max air speed of 175 mph (281 km/h) at 7,000 ft (2,135 m), a ceiling of 18,100 ft. (5,520 m), a range of 2,350 miles (3,780 m), an armament of 5 machine guns, can carry 4,000 lbs of bombs, and has a crew of 7-9.

W.M. Cleveland version:

Earl J. Cooper

Airmen Safe at Hickam 4 days at Sea

Nine men from Hickam really made the news last week when their bomber crashed at sea. They spent four harrowing days adrift in two life rafts until they were fortunately rescued by a naval patrol ship.

Those alive and well today to tell a story that a few can relate are: Lt. Earl J. Cooper, pilot; Lt. R. J. Eberenz, co-pilot; Lt. J. Castro, co-pilot; Lt. J. A. Crockett, navigator; Lt. J.V. Buchanan, bombardier; Tech Sgt. J.R. Broyles, engineer; Sgt. L.W. Best, engineer; Corp. M.A. Lucas and Pvt. D.C. McCord, radio operators.

Lt. Cooper, pilot of the bomber gave the following account of their experience.

“We took off from Hickam Friday, December 26. This was a routine flight and everything went along quite smoothly. At 12:55, we were several hundred miles off Oahu and turned around to go back. Night came and we were still over the sea, blaming our overdue ness on some miscalculation in our readings.

“Our gas supply ran out about midnight so I told the crew to prepare for a crash landing. I feathered the props and set the ship down. Our first thought then was to get out of the ship and on the life rafts. Five of us were in one raft, and the other four were in the second one.

“We saw that everyone was safe and then took stock of our situation. Our provisions consisted of two canteens of three-week-old coffee. There was no water or solid food. The outlook was none too bright we managed to keep awake until daylight.

“The next day we saw a naval patrol bomber but he missed our signals. We fired our pistols every so often in the hopes that he would return and sight our distress. However, that was the only thing we saw that day.

“On the 28th, we saw two naval patrol bombers, but they too missed spotting us. We didn’t see any planes at all on the 29th. During this day however, Private McCord spied a large bird flying overhead. He shot it with a .45 and it dropped in the raft. It was the first food we had so we promptly ate it raw, including a fish we found inside the bird. After we had eaten, our spirits returned and the stories and jokes told around the rafts kept us rather jovial.

We were sighted on the next day by a naval patrol bomber, which dropped provisions at about 1:00 in the afternoon. They returned at 5:30 after having lightened their load. The pilot made one of the best landings I have ever seen. He set that ship down in a sea that was easily running forty feet high.

“Not once,” Lt. Cooper said, “did I hear any complaints from the crew about being hungry or thirsty. The cigarette situation was taken care of by the presence of a water soaked pack. Two cigarettes were passed around one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Everyone got a drag or two, and take it from me; they were the best ones I’ve ever smoked.

The only thing any griping was heard, and that was in fun, was when we totaled up our money and found that we had over six hundred dollars between us. All that money and no place to spend it.” (*Bib #30*)

Joaquin Castro versions from an unknown newspaper clipping:

Letters, which Lieutenant Castro wrote at frequent intervals to his former employer, J.F. Ewers of Mission, revealed many interesting sidelights of his combat experiences and of the philosophy of life, which he had developed.

In November 1942, he wrote that he was getting all the fun he had expected and that he had a sneaking suspicion that he had only started.

One letter described his experiences and his thoughts during the four days when he and eight other members of a bomber crew were adrift, in a rubber life rafts somewhere off Oahu, after their instruments had miscalculated and their plane was forced down, out of fuel.

“For a while there, I was figuring out that it was going to be very interesting finding out all those questions that bother most men as to what lies just beyond in that other world when you step out of this one,” he said. “I was sort of looking forward to it...one thing that was bothering me most was the question of food. Would I have to worry about food over there?”

Footnote: Boy, and sometimes we complain that we had a bad day at the office...never again because it just simply does not compare to what these men had to endure.



*Joaquin with unknown cadet at Basic Flight School
1942*

*“Aloha from Hawaii Sweetheart” Jan. 16,
This picture was sent to his girlfriend*

Hawaii in 1942 (January-April)

Following the rescue and recovery from exposure, dehydration and malnutrition, it was business as usual. Training continued which involved classroom time as well because notes were written in his personal journal for later reference. These entries will be noted in detail throughout the timeline. It is important to mention here that the numerous search and bomb-training missions were essential in the defense of Hawaii but also in the preparation of a major offensive against the enemy. This offensive would be called the battle of Midway in which Joaquin participated.

January 20, 1942

Report of Change Card issued by the 42nd Squadron at Hickam
Joaquin is to be relieved as Asst. Squadron Engineer Officer (Prim Duty) and Appointed Asst. Squadron Tech. Supp. Officer (Prim Duty) as of 20 Jan. 42.

January 24, 1942 (Notes in Journal)

Temerity – syn.- rashness

Perfidy – Reduction of manifold pressure by throttling causes a pressure drop through the carburetor which results in lean fuel mixture and hence detonation sets in.

Hillocks – small hills.

“And if your life you will not stake, the most of life you’ll never make.”

Author unknown

Surging – moving back and forth of fuel in fuel tanks.

Volatility – ability of gasoline to change into vapor. A gas with high volatility has a tendency to cause vapor locks in fuel tanks.

Octane Rating – term use to designate the anti knock value of a gasoline.

- a. Distillation
- b. Crack Process
- c. Absorption

Detonation – compression in cylinder. Qt. reduced f.r.e. means pressure reduced +

Pre-ignition – caused by overheating of cylinder. Or heating of carbon which ignites the fuel instead of the spark plug doing it.

Octane & heptanes compromise oil and fuel ratio: 1 gal – 11 gal.

Why God

(Unreadable short hand)” nonsense” (followed by more short hand)

Sacrament – Sacramento

(short hand followed by) denote a bond between two parties in very good faith – now finally come to be applied to the seven sacraments of the church there joining through them man and God.

Have you ever stop to think why a Chinese or a Japanese will not look you in the eye when speaking to you? Try it next time and see if you can make it next time.

January 30, 1942 (notes in Journal)

Left side – port

Right – starboard

When leaving harbor buoys are red on port side and black on right side.

Buoys with horizontal red and black stripes means danger.

February 1, 1942

Received a Certificate in lieu of efficiency report:

An Efficiency Report will not be rendered in the case of Joaquin Castro, 2nd Lt., Air-Res., 0-428914 for the period from 12 January 1942 to 14 January 1942 inclusive, for the following reasons: Period less than one (1) month.

Reporting officer relieved from assignment.

Delayed by military necessity.

January 15 to February 22, 1942

Efficiency Report:

Asst. Sq. Engr. O (Prin. Duty) – Very Satisfactory

Asst. Sq. Tech. Sup. O (Prin. Duty) – Very Satisfactory

Flying Duty – Excellent

Outstanding specialty of value in the military service is a Co-Pilot B-17.

February 27, 1942

Memorandum of Designation or Change of Emergency Addressee Card Issued by Joaquin.

March 2, 1942

Headquarter Hawaiian Air Force

Subject: Missing Period of Efficiency Report.

In compliance with paragraph 17, AR 600-185, 19 November 1937, it is reported that no efficiency report covering the period 12 November 1941 to 11 January 1942, both dates inclusive, will be rendered on Second Lieutenant JOAQUIN CASTRO (0-428914), Air Reserve, as he served under more than one officer for periods of less than one month during this time.

April 13+14, 1942 (notes in journal)

“For those who believe in God no explanation is necessary; for those who do not believe in God no explanation is possible.”

Father John Lafarge

Copra – dried coconut meat.

Unravel – to tear into shreds
to solve with difficulty.

1. Get shoes at shoe shop.
2. Get pictures at PX
3. See if you can send pictures to “G”. (“G” referred to his girlfriend Gertrudes)

Start thinking about G’s graduation present.

April 18, 1942 (Doolittle Raid)

The Doolittle Raid was the first air raid by the U.S. to strike the Japanese home island of Honshu during WWII. It demonstrated that the Japanese home islands were vulnerable to Allied air attack, and provided an expedient means for U.S. retaliation for Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. The Doolittle Raid was the only time that the USAF bombers were launched from a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier on a combat mission. The raid was planned and led by Lt. Col. James “Jimmy” Doolittle; with the North American B-25B Mitchell, the airplane selected to carryout the mission. The plan was to launch them from a carrier, hit military targets in Japan, and fly on to land in China. All 16 aircraft were lost on the mission, and 11 crew members were either killed or captured. The crews of 13 aircraft, however, were recovered and returned to the U.S., and a 14th crew interned by the Soviet Union eventually made its way home in 1943. While the military significance of the raid was minimal, it proved to be a substantial morale booster for Americans.



Doolittle and Crew (Bib. # 31)



Photo # NH 102457 Lt.Col. Doolittle wires Japanese medals to a bomb

Doolittle returns Jap medal on bomb (Bib. #32)

Photo # NH 53421 USAAF B-25Bs aboard USS Hornet en route to attack Japan, April 1942



B-25 B on Deck of U.S. Carrier (Bib. #33)



B-25B taking off (Bib. #34)



B-25J (Bib. # 34)

Footnote: Made by North American Aviation Inc. The engines were two Wright R-2600-9 Cyclone 14-cylinder radial air-cooled, with 1,700 hp each. The wingspan was 67'7" (20.60 m); length of 54'1" (16.48 m); height of 15'10" (4.08 m); weight of 27,000 lb (12,292 kg) loaded; max speed of 315 mph (507 km/h) at 15,000 ft. (4,570 m); ceiling of 27,000 ft (8,230 m); range of 1,350 miles (2,170 km); armament of 5 machine guns; 3,000 lb (1,360 kg) of bombs; and a crew of 5.

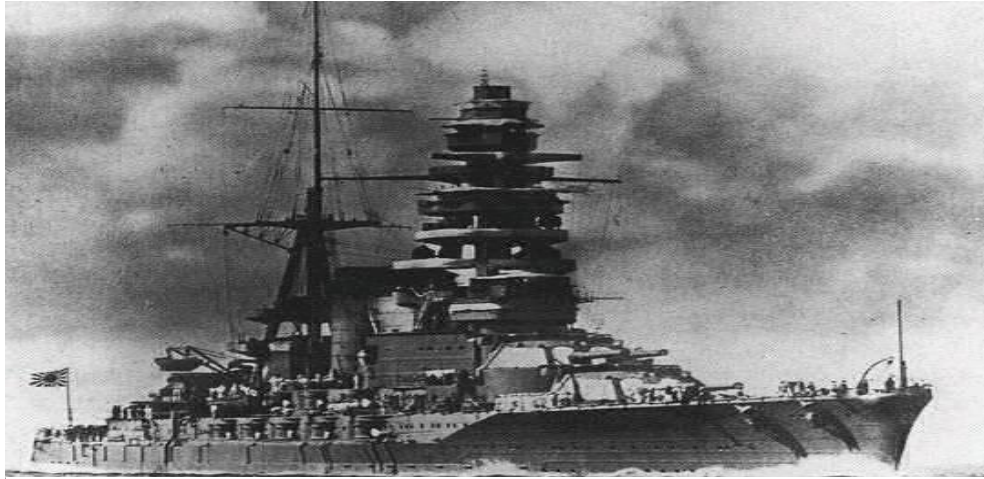
April 21, 1942 (notes from journal)

General Characteristics (Japanese) fleet:

April 21, 1942 (notes from journal)
General Characteristics (Japanese) fleet:

Battleships

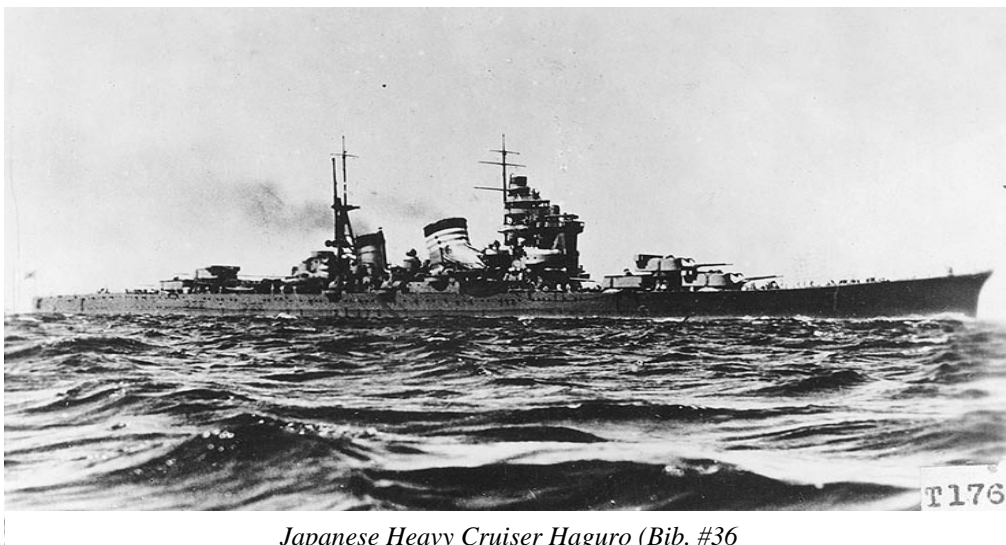
1. Massive & tired super structures
2. Beam (W/L) ratio about 7-1
3. two gun turrets
4. secondary turrets



Japanese Battleship flagship the Nagato (Bib. # 35)

Heavy Cruiser

1. Combination funnel
2. W/L ratio 10-1
3. Sec. Batt. (secondary battery) not on same plane



Japanese Heavy Cruiser Haguro (Bib. #36)

Light Cruiser

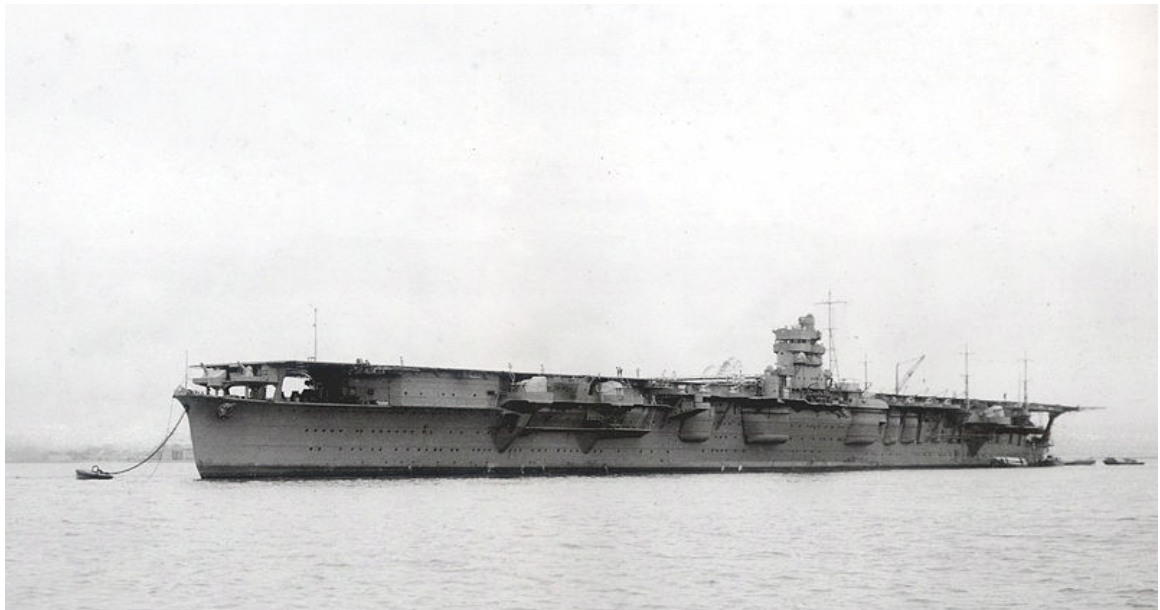
1. 3 or more stacks naked and in line
2. end flat
3. single gun turrets
4. torpedo tubes (one catapult)



Japanese Light Cruiser Sendai (Bib. #37)

Aircraft Carrier

1. Very small superstructure
2. All batteries are below flight deck
3. flight deck is curved down extended over stern



Japanese Aircraft carrier Hiryu (Bib. #38)

Footnote: It is apparent that his squadron was preparing for action soon.

He also adds the following:

Egyptians= (shorthand)

Romans= (shorthand with) white, rejoicing

Greeks= (shorthand with) fidelity and loyalty

Primitive man= (shorthand) steal (more shorthand)

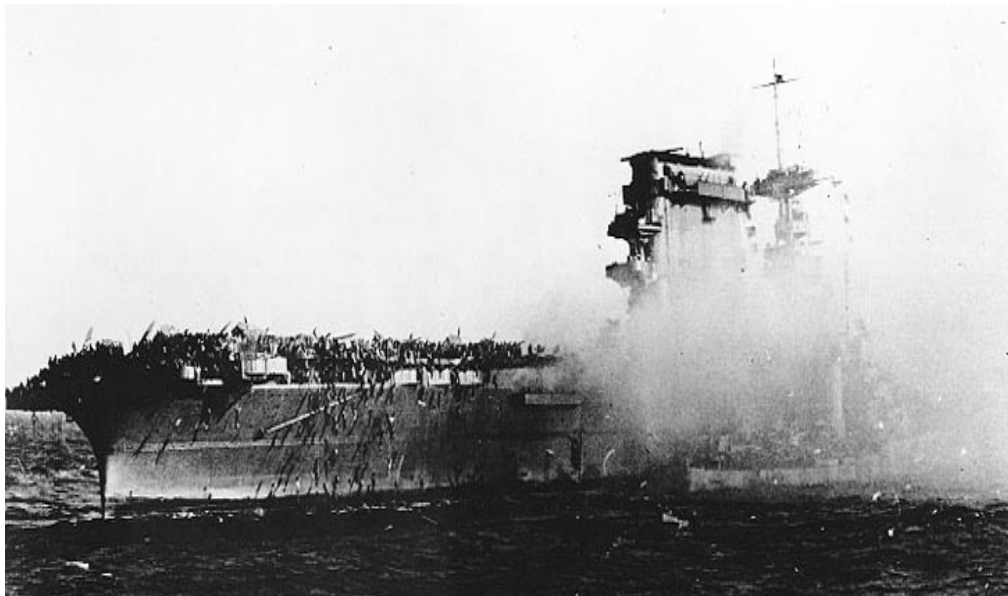
Apathy= no feeling, nothing is interesting and appealing

“Show me what a man reads and I’ll read you the man”

Joaquin Castro

May 4-8, 1941 (Coral Sea Battle)

Coral Sea Battle: This was a major naval battle between Japan and the U.S. and Australia. This was the first fleet action in which carriers engaged. It was also the first naval battle in history in which neither side fired directly upon the other. It was a tactical victory for the Japanese since the U.S lost the USS Lexington in exchange for a light carrier Shoho. However, it was a strategic victory for the Allies because the Japanese abandoned their attempt to land troops to take Port Moresby, New Guinea. The engagement ended with no clear victor, but the damage suffered and experience gained by both sides set the stage for the Battle of Midway one month later. (*Bib. #40*)



Lexington sinks after being hit by two torpedoes (Bib. #39)

On Captain Hall's Crew

May of 1942, Joaquin starts to write down his Flying times and remarks in his journal. On his first entry, he notes that he is on Captain Earl Hall's Crew and he primarily flew the B-17D in month of May (with exception of flying and "E" model on May 14). It was not until June 2, 1942 that he exclusively flew the B-17E until his last mission on February 1, 1943.

May 10, 1942

Search (1) – Search mission out of Hawaii (From Hickam) and back again. Flight time (FT) was fifteen hrs. (FT = 15:00)

May 12, 1942

P. Bombing – Practice Bombing Hawaii (From Hickam). FT = 3:45
Local – Practice night landings. FT = 1:15

May 14, 1942

Formation – Formation and Bombing Kauai #1 (from Hickam). FT = 4:00

May, 17, 1942

Bombing – Bombing at Kauai (from Hickam). FT = 4:00
Training – With Capt. Eberenz to Hilo and back to Hickam. FT = 3:00

May 18, 1942

Interception (2) – Squadron interception problem (from Hickam). FT = 4:00

May 19, 1942

Local – Practice night landings – Oahu (from Hickam). FT = 2:00

May 20, 1942

Local – Radio range orientation problems (from Hickam). FT = 2:00

May 24, 1942

Search (3) – Search contacted DD & SS. (F) (out of Hickam). FT = 11:00 (F = Friendly, DD = Destroyer, SS = Submarine)

May 28, 1942

Search (4) – Search out of Hickam – no contacts. FT = 12:00

May 29, 1942

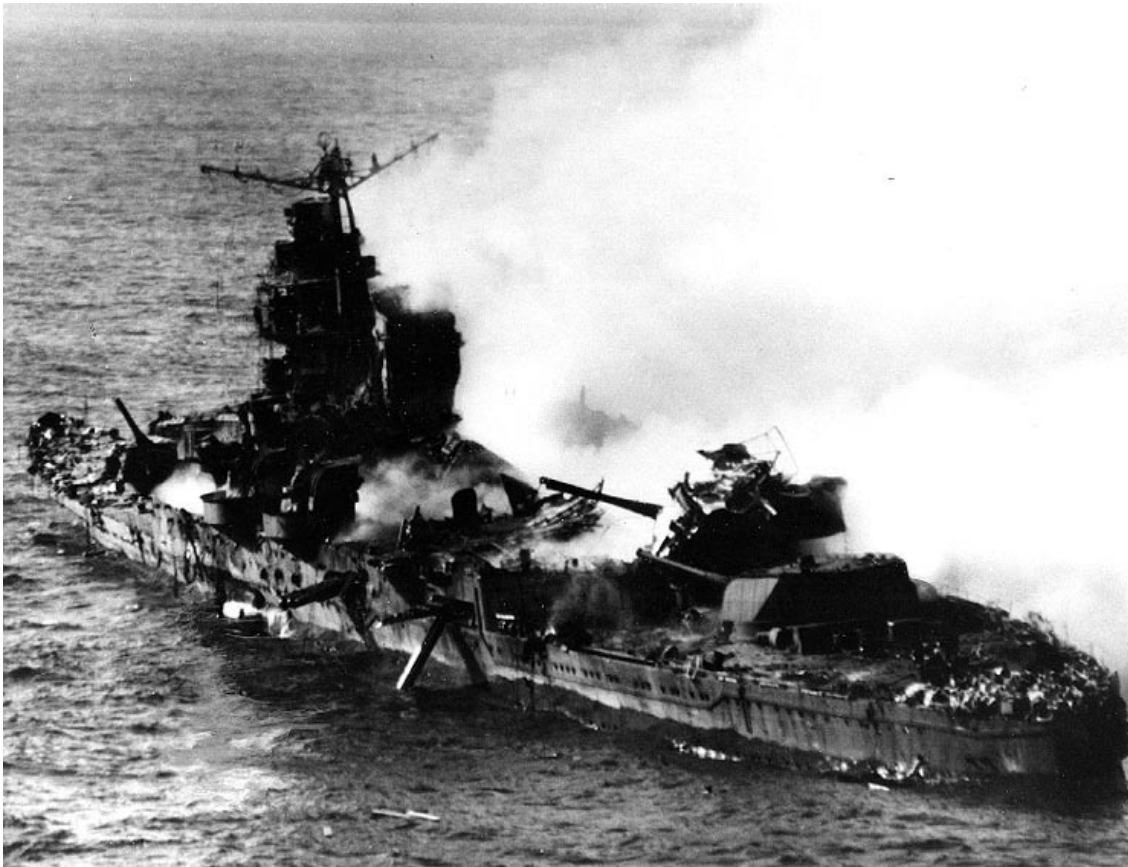
Local – Dawn patrol around Oahu (from Hickam). FT = 2:05

May 30, 1942

Local – Compass Swing (from Hickam). FT = 2:00 *(The process of swinging and compensating a ship or aircraft compass by determining and reducing the deviation coefficients and recording the residual deviations; now done by computer.) (Bib. #41)*

May 31, 1942

Local – Dawn Patrol to Kauai and back. FT = 2:00



Sinking of the Cruiser Mikuma at Midway (Bib. # 78)

Midway

During the month of June many missions were slated for the 42nd. Sources quote that the 11th Bomber Group, the Group the 42nd Squadron belongs to, was very active and participated in the Battle of Midway. The direct participation was to protect Hawaii from another possible attack or invasion from a reported approaching Japanese fleet. Subsequently, Joaquin's flight log confirms the squadron's involvement by patrolling and protecting the Island of Oahu before, during and after the Battle of Midway. His direct involvement in Midway Island itself followed the battle on the 13th of June until the end of the month as the records below will indicate. Even though no one wrote down "official" activities of the 42nd, for posterity, let the logs below serve as a good substitute.

June 2, 1942

Local – Dawn Patrol around Oahu (out of Hickam). FT = 2:00

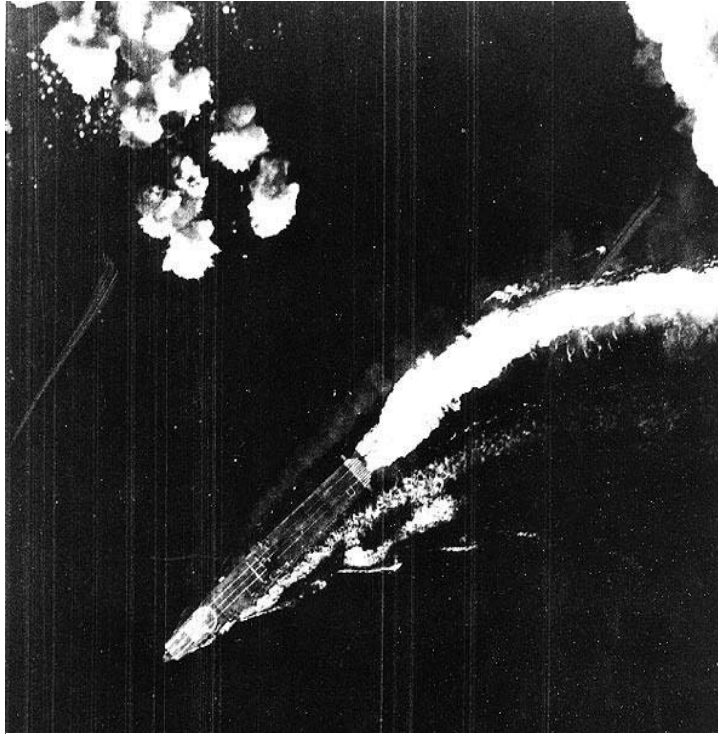
Local – Moved out of Hickam to Kualoa Point; change of station. FT = 0:40

Footnote: Kualoa was a far cry from storied Hickam. Here the men were housed in small wooden shacks which clustered against the side of a mountain, looking as though they would drop off into the sea if anyone so much as snapped his fingers loudly. The strip itself was a grass-grown metal landing mat, laid on the site of an old sugar mill. The area was so small that the strip extended from one end of the available land to the other, both ends stopping only for the Bay. The entire base was so well camouflaged that it was impossible to distinguish it from an open field from a few thousand feet in the air. Revetment were dug into the hill, with netting stretched over them. To complete the effect, a road crossed the strip about two-thirds of the way from the north end. This necessitated stopping all traffic when the planes took off, and the whole process was reminiscent of a railroad crossing, even to the red lights and the guards on each side of the mat. (Bib. #41)

June 4-7 (Battle of Midway)

The Battle of Midway was a major naval battle widely regarded as the most important one of the Pacific Campaign of WW2. It took place approximately one month after the Battle of the Coral Sea, five months after the Japanese capture of Wake Island, and exactly six months to the day after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. The U.S. decisively defeated a Japanese attack against Midway Atoll. Four Japanese aircraft carriers and one heavy cruiser were sunk along with 332 carrier aircraft destroyed and 3,500 men killed. In exchange for one American aircraft carrier and destroyer, 98 carrier aircraft destroyed and 307 men killed. The heavy losses

permanently weakened the Imperial Japanese Navy. As a result of Midway, strategically, the U.S. Navy was able to seize the initiative in the Pacific and go on the offensive. Had this not happened the Japanese plan was to occupy Midway to extend their defensive perimeter and make plans to attack Fiji, Samoa and invade Hawaii. (*Bib. #43*)



Bombing of Japanese Carrier Hiryu (Bib. 44)

June 6, 1942

Search (5) – Search mission out of Hawaii (from Kualoa landed at Hickam).
FT = 11:15

June 7, 1942

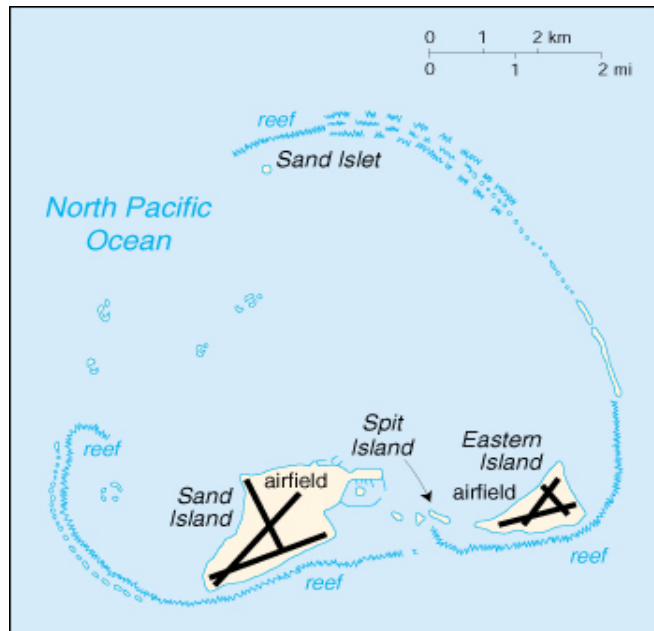
Local – Hickam to Kualoa. FT = 0:20

June 9, 1942

Local – Compass Swing (from Kualoa). FT = 1:45

June 13, 1942

Formation (6) – Oahu (Kualoa) to Midway. FT = 8:00



The Islands of Midway (Bib. # 46)

June 14, 1942

Search (7) – Searched for Enemy out of Midway. FT = 7:47

June 15, 1942

Local – Compass Swing (from Midway). FT = 1:15

June 16, 1942

Search (7) – Search Midway. FT = 8:45

June 18, 1942

Search (8) – Search Midway. FT = 8:30

June 19, 1942

Local – Compass Swing (out of Midway). FT = 1:30

June 20, 1942

Search (9) – Searched Midway for enemy. FT = 8:30

June 22, 1942

Search (10) – Searched Midway for enemy. FT = 8:30

June 24, 1942

Search (11) - Search Midway for enemy. FT = 9:00

Report of Change Card received from Hickam stating: Relieved as Asst. Squadron Tech. Supply Officer (08PN) (Prim duty) and Appointed Asst.

Squadron Operations Officer (08CI) (Prim duty) and Asst. Squadron Censor (082C) (Additional duty) as of 24 June 42.

June 25, 1942

Search (12) – Searched for survivals at sea out of Midway. FT = 8:00

June 26, 1942

Formation (13) – Formation flight from Midway to Kualoa Hawaii . FT =10:00

June 30, 1942

P Bombing – Practice bombing mission from Kualoa. FT = 1:30



Joaquin with his niece Julie. (My Aunt)

Leaving Hawaiian Home

The chronological history according to Joaquin will continue. A big Thanks to Hal Hall for sharing his research on the movements of the 42nd squadrons from July 18, 1942 until the last mission on February 1, 1943. His research came from a Mission Report (*IRIS No. 44028*) which was provided by the Air Force Historical Association. I will utilize it to supplement Joaquin's logs and used parenthesis, "{ }", to quote the Report.

July 1, 1942

Bombing – Practice Bombing from Kualoa. FT = 3:00

July 3, 1942

Gunnery – Gunnery practice formation out of Kualoa. FT = 1:20

July 5, 1942

Search (14) – Search Mission out of Kualoa. FT = 4:30

July 11, 1942

Local – Kualoa to Kahuku. FT = 0:40

July 12, 1942

Local – Compass Swing out of Kahuku to Hickam. FT = 1:30

July 14, 1942

Local – Hickam to Kahuku. FT = 0:45

July 15, 1942

Local – Kahuku to Hickam. FT = 0:30

Local – Hickam to Kahuku. FT = 0:30

July 16, 1942

Local – Kahuku to Hickam. FT = 0:30

Local – Hickam to Kahuku. FT = 0:30

July 18, 1942

(X-C) – Kahuku, Hawaii to Christmas Island. {B-17E # 41-9213 [ship # 213 in short note] on third flight (with 8 other ships) left 0800 and landed 1700}. FT = 9:00 [*HAPPY 25th BIRTHDAY JOAQUIN!*]

July 19, 1942

(X-C) – Christmas Island to Canton. {Ship #213 on third flight (with 8 other ships) left at 1110 and landed at 1745}. FT = 6:30

July 20, 1942

(X-C) – Canton to Nandi, Fiji Islands (Nandi Field). {Ship #213 on third flight (with 8 other ships) left Canton at 0645 and landed at Nandi, Fiji at 1415. The International Date Line was crossed from Canton to Fiji.} FT = 7:35 [*Fantan = Fiji*]

July 22, 1942

(X-C) – Fiji Islands to New Caledonia. {Ship #213 third flight (with 8 other ships) took off from Nandi, Fiji at 0830 and landed at Plaines des Gaiacs, New Caledonia at 1430.} FT = 6:30 [*New Caledonia = “Poppy”*]

July 24, 1942

Local – Dawn Patrol at New Caledonia (Plaines des Gaiacs=PdG). {Ship #213 took off at 0600 with three other ships} FT = 2:00

July 25, 1942 (was not noted on Joaquin’s log yet appeared on Missions Report) Ship #213 along with four other ships went on Dawn Patrol. T.O. time illegible. FT =?

July 26, 1942

Local – Dawn Patrol at New Caledonia. {Ship #213 with 6 other ships went on dawn patrol at 0600.} FT = 2:30

July 27, 1942 - Ship #213 Capt. Hall along with five others went on Dawn Patrol at 0600. FT =?

July 28, 1942

Search (1) – Search out of N.C.; no contacts. {Ship #213 along with one other out for 600 miles-no contacts} FT – 8:40

July 31, 1942

(X-C) – New Caledonia to Efate (Vila Field). {Ship #213 with one other took off 0955 and landed at Efate at 1100}. FT = 2:35

Footnote: It should be noted here that other units occupied Plains des Gaiacs, New Caledonia. A Marine unit with Corsairs was stationed there to fight off Japanese bombers. The 69th Bombardment Squadron was also there using B-26 Marauders.



F4U Corsair (Bib. # 46)

Footnote: Vought manufactured the F4U-1. It has one Pratt & Whitney R-2800-8 Double Wasp 18-cylinder radial air-cooled engine with 2,000 hp. Its wingspan is 41ft. (12.50 m), a length of 33'4 1/2" (10.16 m), a height of 15'1" (4.60 m), a weight of 13,120 lbs. (5,950 kg) loaded, a max speed of 417 mph (671 km/h) at 19,900 ft. (6,065 m), a ceiling of 36,900 ft. (11,250 m), a range of 1,015 miles (1,635 km), and an armament of 6 machine guns.



B-26 Marauder (Bib. # 47)

Footnote: Martin B-26B Marauder was built by Martin Co. It has two Pratt & Whitney R-2800-41 Double Wasp 18-cylinder radial air-cooled engines with 2,000 hp each. Its wingspan is 65 ft. (19.81 m), its length is 58'3" (17.75 m), a height of 19'10" (6.05 m), a weight of 34,000 lbs (15,422 kg) loaded, a max speed of 317 mph (510 km/h) at 14,500 ft. (4,420 m), a ceiling of 23,500 ft. (7,200 m), a range of 1,150 miles (1,850 km), and armament of 6 machine guns, 3,000 lbs (1,360 kg) of bombs and a crew of 7.



Unknown Officer and crewmen at unknown location

Busy-Busy-Busy Month of August

August will prove to be the busiest month time on record. The evidence below will illustrate that our boys got very little time off and the conditions on these islands were very poor. The biggest obstacle was the weather because it rained constantly and movement in very muddy conditions was almost impossible. Second were the bugs and diseases they inflicted. Then it was the enemy bombers that would come when you least expected them to. Everyone lent a hand to continue the push on towards the Solomon Islands despite the poor conditions. Everyone from the cooks to Lt. Col. Saunders, himself, got in the mud to help roll drums of fuel to the B-17's to fuel them while groups of available men carried the 100 to 500 pound bomb onto the planes. More details of these conditions for a later chapter.

August 1, 1942

Fotogroup (2) – Foto mission over Malaita, Solomon Islands (out of Efate). {Ship #213 Special photo mission (no pictures, bad weather)}. FT = 9:55

August 2, 1942

(X-C) – Efate to New Caledonia. {Ship #213 a ferry mission to PdG}, FT = 2:50

August 3, 1942

Observation (3) – Observation of our fleet. {*No note from Mission Reports*}, FT = 6:20

August 4, 1942

Search (4) – Search out of New Caledonia. {*No Mission Report*}. FT = 10:20

August 6, 1942

Search (5) – Search out of N.C. – lost again – 3 times now – engine troubles. {*No Mission Report*}. FT = 10:55

August 7, 1942

Special Orders No. 211

Paragraph 21. DP the following officers are temp promoted in AUS (Army of the United States) to grades indicated. Date of rank is date of this order unless otherwise indicated after name. These promotions unless sooner terminated, terminate upon relief from active Fe. Serv., except those made in AUS (AC) which continue in force until six months after termination any war in which the USA was engaged on 16 Feb. 1942, or until relieved from assignment to AAF, whichever is earlier. (Officers now on AD with AAF

and promoted in AUS (AC) under authority of Pub. 455, 77th Congress, indicated by “(AC)” after name). Execute oath of office and forward to TAG. Joaquin Castro (AC) 0428914 Air 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt.

Action Memorandum Sheet for Promotion of Reserve and NGUS Officers under AAF REGs 35-18. Castro Joaquin Serial No. 0-428914 for Temporary Promotion to 1st Lt. AUS (AC) by order of the Secretary of War.

August 10, 1942

Search (6) – Searched out of New Caledonia. {Ship #213 out 700 miles with two other ships, no contacts}. FT = 9:00

August 11, 1942

Formation – From New Cal. To Efate. {*No Mission Report*}. FT = 2:10

August 12, 1942

(X-C) – Efate to Espiritu Santo. {Ship #213 Roses to Buttons 0750-0900}, FT = 1:32 [*Efate* = “**Roses**”; *Espiritu Santo* = “**Buttons**”]

(X-C) – Santos to Efate. {Ship #213 Buttons to Roses, 1015-1140}. FT = 1:20

{Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Roses to Buttons, 1200 -1316. FT = 3:16}

August 13, 1942

Cargo – Cargo from Efate to Santos. {*No Mission Report*}. FT = 1:06

(X-C) – Santos to Efate. {*No Missions Report*}. FT = 1:20

Footnote: These two missions are noted by Joaquin but no mention on the Mission Reports because he was probably with a different crew or was piloting his own ship. The reason that Joaquin went to Efate “Roses”, on this day, was to receive his Temporary 1st Lt. Promotion and sign his Oath of Office:

I, Joaquin Castro 0-428914, having been appointed temporarily a First Lieut. Grade in the Army of the United States, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter: SO HELP ME GOD.

Signed: Joaquin Castro- First Lieut., A.A.F., 42nd Bomb. Sq. (H). Sworn to and subscribed before me, at APO #932-Roses this 13th day of August, 1942. Captain Carl W. Mumm A.A.F., Adjutant, 11th Bomb. Group (H).

Report of Change Card – Appointed 1st Lt. Date of Rank 7 Aug. 42
Joaquin joined up again with Capt. Hall on Aug. 19, 1942 mission.

August 14, 1942

Cargo – Efate to Santos. {Ship #213 – Roses to Buttons, 1515-1620}. FT = 1:16.

August 15, 1942

Search (7) – Search mission out of Santo into Solomons. {Ship #213, Out 700 mi. Contact: None }. FT = 9:30

August 16, 1942

{Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Swing compass.}

August 17, 1942

Patrol – Santos, off-shore patrol. {Ship #213, Capt. Hall, Buttons – Nandi} FT – 3:00

August 18, 1942

Bombing (8) – Bombing of Gizo, New Georgia Is. Out of Santos {Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Bombed enemy shipping at Gizo. No hits observed, the weather was very bad. No damage to own ship.} FT = 8:30

August 19, 1942

(X-C) – Santo to New Cal. {Ship #213, Buttons to Roses to PdG.} FT = 3:35

August 21, 1942

Escort – Escorted P-400's from N.C. to Efate. *{No Missions Report}* FT = 2:35

Escort – Escorted P-400's from Efate to Santos. *{No Missions Report}* FT = 1:30

August 22, 1942

Escort (9) – Escorted P-400's from Santos to Guadalcanal (Henderson Field). {Ship #213 along with another Ferry mission to Cactus 0730 – 1200} FT = 9:00 [*Guadalcanal = “Cactus”*]

August 25, 1942

Bombing (10) – Bombed Ships at Gizo Harbor (out of Santo) with Norton (Lt. Charles Norton) { date conflict: Norton mission is listed on 24th of Aug. and Joaquin lists it on the 25, However Ship #420, Lieut Norton out 600 miles. Made contact and attacked enemy DD (Destroyer) in Gizo Harbor. Three 500 pounders. No hits, the bombs failed to release [illegible] first two runs. Attacked once by fighter off Lengo. No Damage} FT = 13:30

Footnote: A laundry list was entered in Joaquin's journal on this day. The items listed were: 2-sheets, 1-pillow case, 1-face towel, 1-bath towel, 1-rag towel, 8-handkerchiefs, 3pr-socks (cotton), 3pr-socks, 4-shorts, 2pr-breedes ckc, 6 shirts ckc (1-white), 1-flight cap.

August 26, 1942

Search (11) – Search, (out of Santo) Contacted Enemy 4-engine flying boat – shot same down – attacked by zeros. {Date conflict - Mission report records the 25th of Aug. while Joaquin records the 26th, However: Ship #425 Out 750 miles contacted and engaged 4 engine flying boat 50 mi. NW Gizo Island. Elevators shot away and boat believed destroyed. Was circling what appeared to be wreckage when engaged by on Zero. No visible damage to Zero. Two holes in own ship. No injuries. [pencil note: Pilot Silver Star. Recommended and received Air Medal]}. FT = 12:40

*As written from General Order No. 8 AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL
January 5, 1943: JOAQUIN CASTRO, (0-428914), First Lieutenant, United States Army Air Corps, for meritorious achievement in air operations against the enemy on August 16, 1942 [wrong date noted], in the Solomon Island area. Lieutenant Castro as crew member of a heavy bombardment airplane on a search mission, participated in a attack upon a Japanese four-engine flying boat which was sighted and engaged at a point about 50 miles northwest of Gizo Island, approximately 45 minutes, finally being shot down by Lieutenant Castro and other members of the crew. Immediately following this action, their airplane was attacked by an enemy fighter, which made one pass, secured two hits on the left wing and then pursued, out of range, for approximate 50 miles before turning away.*

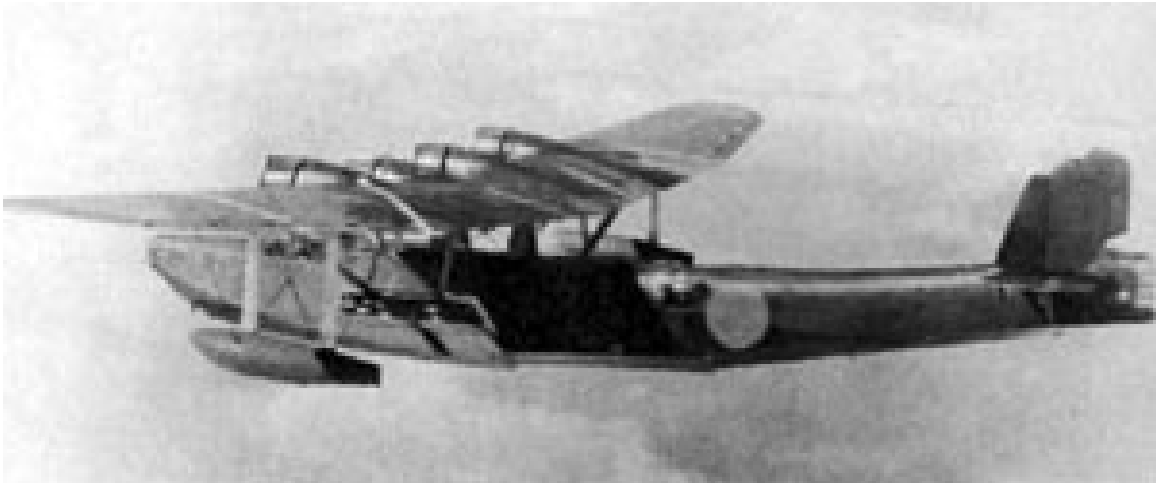
August 28, 1942

Search (12) – Search out of Santo. {Ship #213, Out 700 miles contacted Submarine off Cape Nahahau, San Cristobal. Weather prevented bombing or strafing.} FT = 11:00

August 31, 1942

(X-C) – Santo to New Caledonia. {Ship #420, Buttons to PdG}. FT = 3:00

Footnoe: Below are illustrations of planes and ships that were mentioned or seen during this busy month of August.



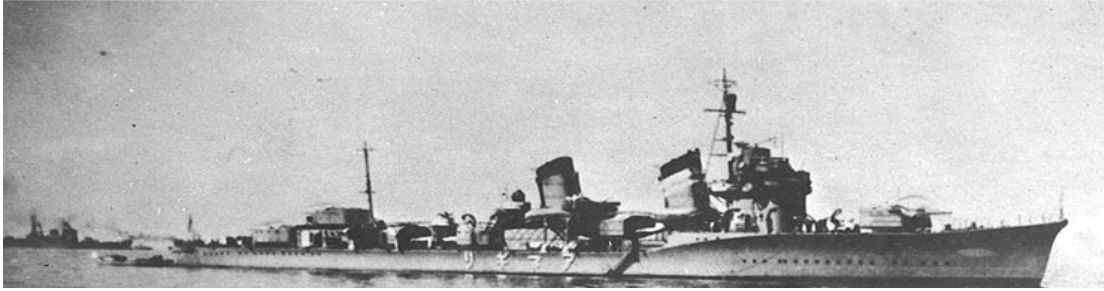
4-Engine Flying Boat Kawanishi H6K "Mavis" (Bib. #48)

Footnote: Though there is no record of what kind of 4 engine flying boat that was shot down on August 26 however, let the above photos and below photos illustrate that it was one of these two versions.

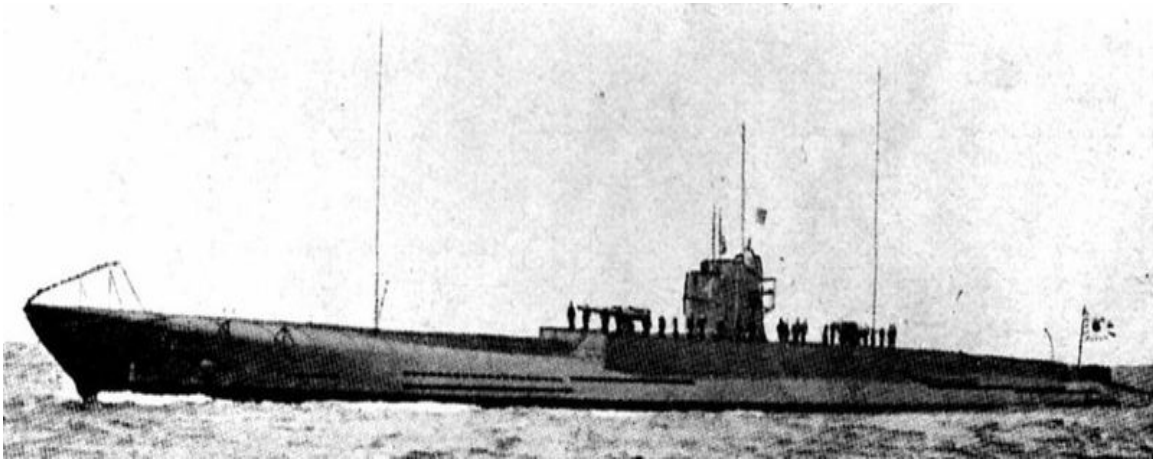


Kawanishi H8K "Emily" (Bib. # 49)

Photo # NH 50198 Japanese destroyer Amagiri, prior to World War II



Japanese Destroyer Amagiri possibly seen on August.25. (Bib.# 50)



Japanese Submarine possibly seen on August 28 (Bib. # 51)



Mitsubishi A6M3 "Zeke" or "Zero" is the type that attacked on Aug. 25th. (Bib #52)



P-40 Airacobra (Bib.#53)

Footnote: The P-40 was a redesignation from ex-British planes that were repossessed by the USAAF after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Their specifications are the same as P-39's. They were built by Bell Aircraft Corp. and have one Allison V-1710-35 12-cylinder V liquid-cooled 1,150 hp engine. The wingspan is 34 ft. (10.36 m), length of 30'2" (9.19 m), height of 11'10" (3.60 m), weight of 7,845 lbs. (3,520 kg) loaded, max speed of 335 mph (536 km/h) at 13,800 ft (4,200 m), ceiling of 29,000 ft (8,900 m), range of 600 miles (960 km), armament of 1 x 37 mm cannon and 4 machine guns and could hold 500 lbs (226 kg) of bombs.



Colorized version of original

Calmer September

The month of September proved to be calmer than August as far as number of missions Joaquin was sent on. The missions may have decreased but the intensity increased. You will note one of the longest times off from mission to mission. Joaquin's last entry in August was on the 31st and does not record again until September 10. This was probably a time in which they took care of repairs, attended military briefings or just took care of business around camp.

September 10, 1942

Test Hop – Test hopped ship #420 – Johnny came for a ride. *{No Mission Reports}*, FT = 2:13

September 11, 1942

(C-X) – New Caledonia to Efate. *{No Mission Report}*. FT = 2:20

(C-X) – Efate to Santos. *{No Mission Report}* FT = 1:00

September 12, 1942

Search (13) – Search out of Santo – very bad weather, no contacts. {Ship #420, Out 800 mi. contact: None.}. FT = 12:30.

EXTRA trip from Mission Report: Ship #420, Capt. Hall. Roses to Buttons. (Not on Joaquin's log – He has the crew in Santo).

September 13, 1942

Bombing (14) – Looking for Jap Task force (out of Santo) – no contacts. {Ship #213 along with Norton on ship #420 both part of the striking force that took off at 1300. Flew for five hours without contact with the enemy. Returned to base at 1800}. FT = 7:00.

EXTRA trip from Missions Report: Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Rose to Buttons. 0530 0635 (not on Joaquin's log – He has the crew in Santo)?

September 15, 1942

Search (15) – Search out of Santo. {Ship #213, Out 800 mi. Contacted Enemy task force of [illegible] Cruisers, 1-DD, and 1- SS, 15 miles N. of Molombangari, Bombed Reykata Bay and started a number of fires. Made three runs. No AA.}. FT = 12:00

September 18, 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall Striking with 4 other ships but did not take off.

September 19, 1942

Bombing (16) – Bombed Rakata Bay (or Rekata Bay) out of Santo – No hits observed. {Ship #213, Out 750 miles contacts: none 324 329}. FT = 11:15.

September 20, 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall, along with four others were striking but did not take off.

September 21, 1942

Search (17) – Bombed Rakata Bay out of Santo (or Rekata Bay) – fires started. {Ship #213, Out 700 miles contacted and bombed Reykata Bay, no opposition, and very little if any damage done. No AA}. FT =10:15

September 24, 1942

(C-X) – Santos to New Caledonia. {Ship #213, Buttons to Tontouta, N.C. for repairs. (Mission report has Sept. 23 written instead of 24.)}. FT = 3:25

September 29, 1942

Reported to the Aid Station on New Caledonia (P de G) with acute bronchitis.

September 30, 1942

X-Ray of chest shows some very questionable perivascular marking in lower left lung field. Otherwise, negative for pulmonary or cardiac pathology.

October 1, 1942

Sed. Index (57)

10 - - 2 20 - - 7 30 - - 16

40 - - 22 50 - - 28 60 - - 38

Yellow – 1.027 Clear – Neg. Acid – Neg.

Tubercle bacilli negative.

October 2, 1942

R.B.C. – 4,200,000 W.B.C. – 6350 Hp.- 100

Dispatched for duty ***October 5, 1942.***

October 5, 1942

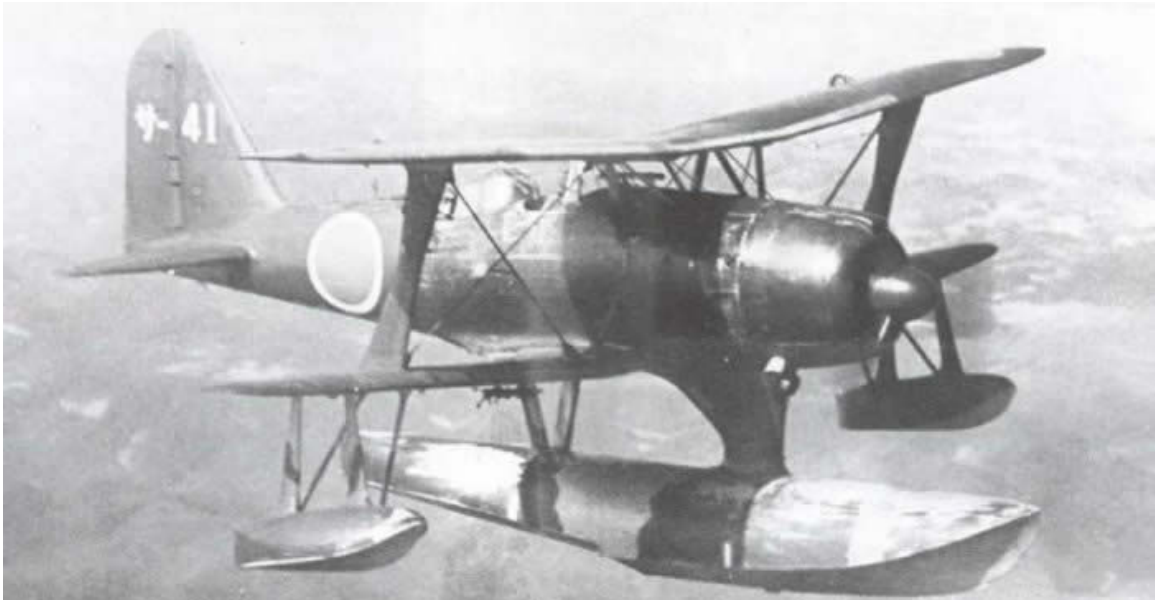
Dispatched for duty by Aid Station at P de G New Caledonia.

Signed another OATH OF OFFICE (again?) for Temp. 1st Lt. at Plains Des Gaiacs, N.C. in front of Capt. Harry Ashkinaze AAF Adjutant.

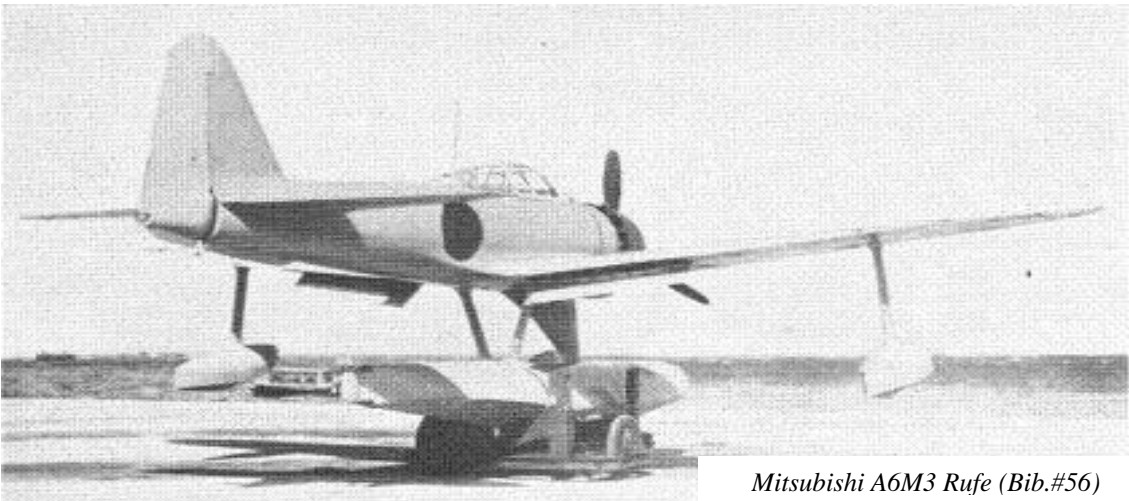
Footnote: Bombing missions on Rakata (Rekata) Bay Santa Isabel Island were specifically targeting enemy seaplanes and their bases and bombers. Following are examples of these planes.



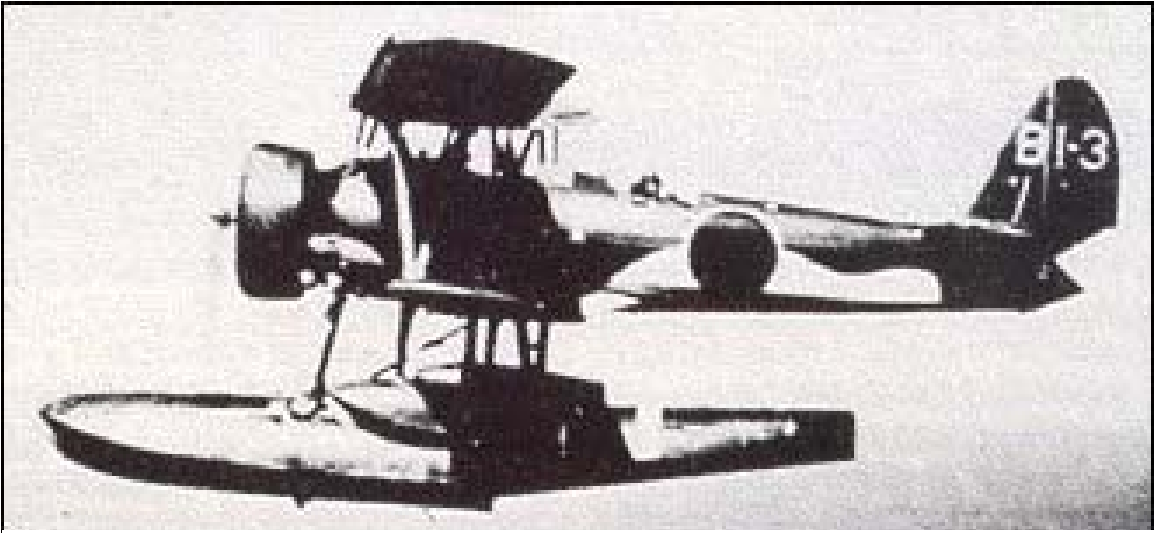
Aichi E13A "Jake" (Bib. #54)



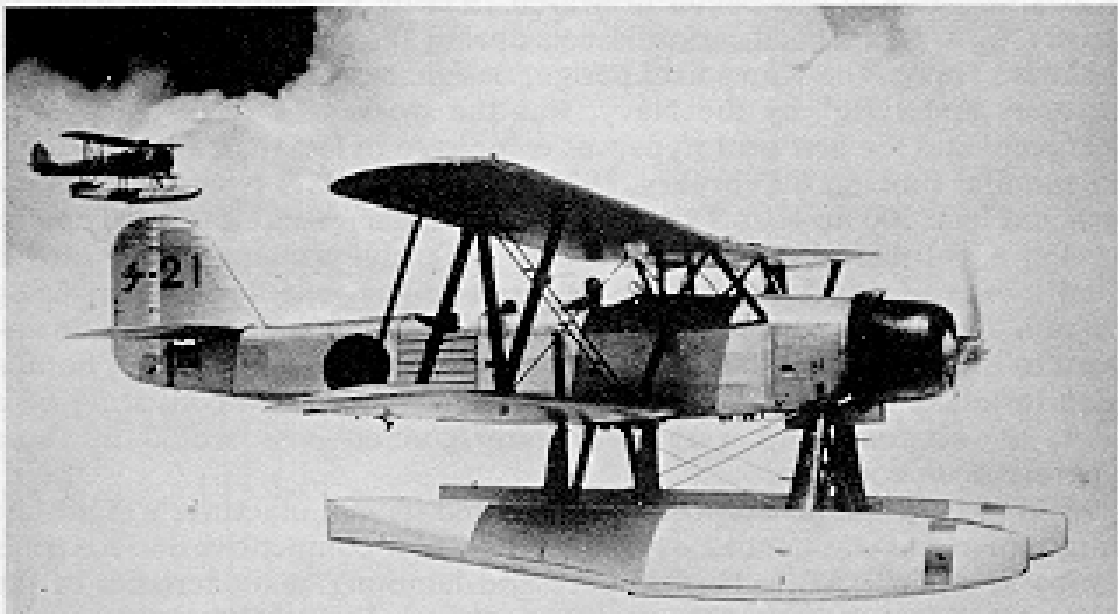
Mitsubishi F1M2 "Pete" (Bib. # 55)



Mitsubishi A6M3 *Rufe* (Bib.#56)



Nakajima E8N2 "Dave" (Bib.



Kawasaki E7K "Alf" (Bib. #58)



Mitsubishi G4M1 "Betty" (Bib. # 59)

October Skies

October 5, 1942

(C-X) – New Caledonia to Santos. {Ship #213, PdG to Roses to Buttons}.
FT = 4:25

October 8, 1942

Search (18) – Search out of Santos – Contacted Jap Task Force, attacked by 2 zero fighters shot down one, landed at Guadalcanal, stayed there overnight. {Ship #213, Out 825 miles contact Enemy fighters, 5 DD, 1 Heavy cruiser. Dropped aerial bombs and made overhead passes almost head on. One fighter knocked down. AA very light. Damage to own ship holes in left wing, aileron, elevator and navigator glass, deep cut in #2 prop. Heavy cruiser appeared to be on fire, a lot of black smoke}. FT = 11:00

October 9, 1942

(X-C) + Search (19) – Guadalcanal to Santos. {Ship #213, Out 450 miles form Cactus. Contact: None.} FT = 4:30

October 12, 1942

Search (20) – Search out of Santos – sighted life raft – Rescued. {Ship #535, Out 800 miles. Contact: None.} FT = 12:15

October 14, 1942

Bombing (21) – Striking against Jap task force (out of Santo) – darkness. {Ship #426, on 15 min. alert took off at 1500 and flew about 575 miles in search of a Jap task force. No contacts made. Returned to base at 2240. FT = 8:00

October 18, 1942

Search (22) – Search out of Santos. {Oct. 16-Ship #216, out 800 miles. Contact: none.} FT = 12:00

October 20, 1942

Ship #151, Capt. Hall, and 3 other ships on strike but did not take off.

October 21, 1942

Ship #444, Capt. Hall, with three other ships were all on one-hour alert and did not take off.

October 23, 1942

Ship #431, Capt Hall, with three other ships were on one-hour alert and did not take off.

October 24, 1942

Local – Test hop #213 over Santos. {Ship #213, one-hour slow time on plane.} FT = 1:45

October 25, 1942

Search (23) – Search out of Santos contacted, 1- BB, 3- DD Japs, attacked by zeros good clouds. {Ship 444, Out 800 mi. Cont: 1-CA (heavy cruiser), 3-DD, 3 Zeros land base came in at once from rear and above. Climbed into the clouds. No damage done to plane or personnel.} FT = 13:00



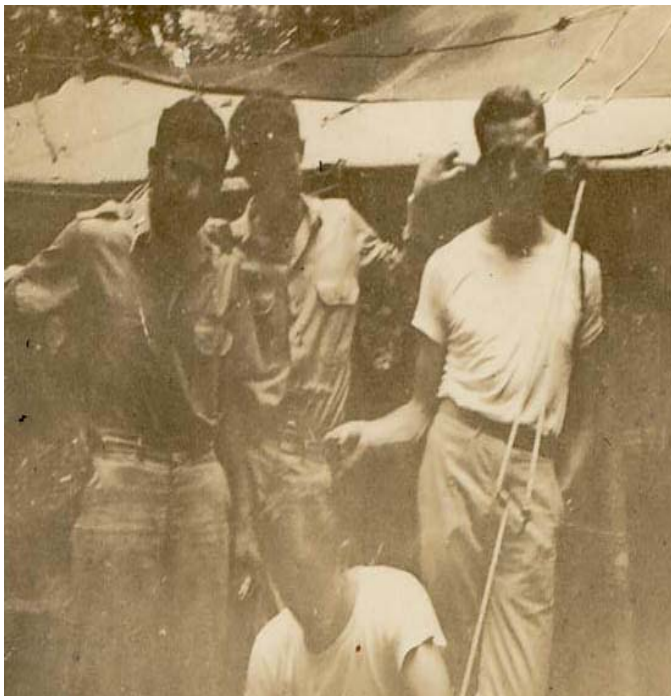
Under the Wing of a B-17 resting and socializing on Espiritu Santo (Buttons). Joaquin's back is facing out. Unknown crewmember on the left (Frank Sterns?) and background



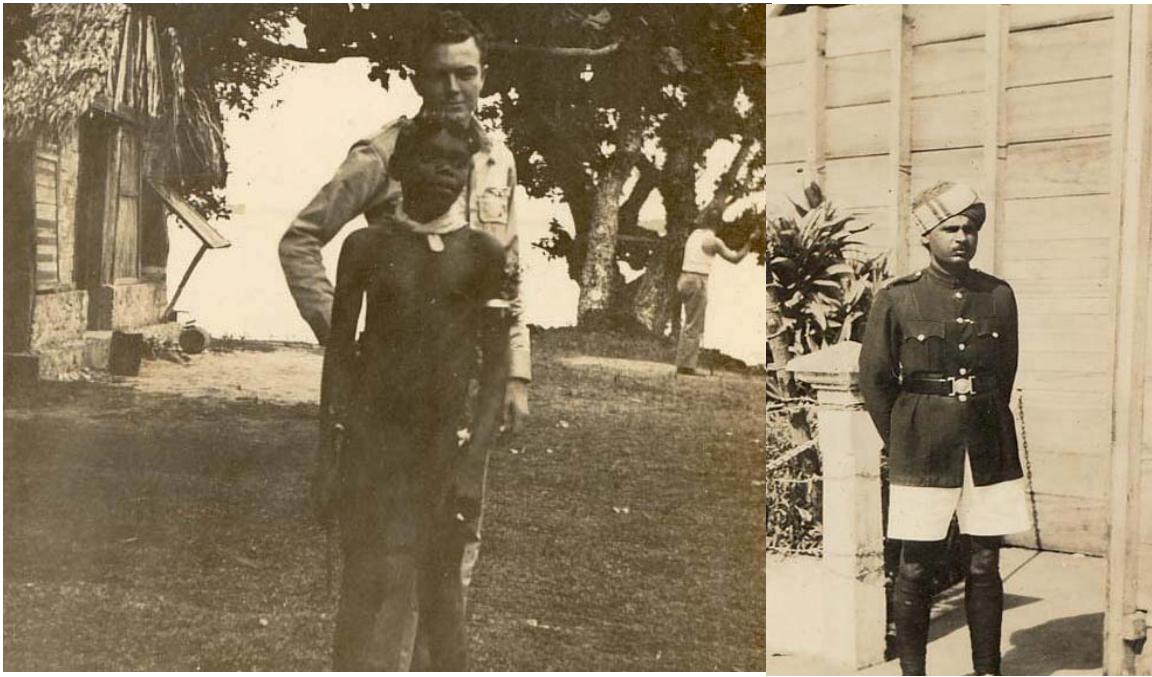
Unknown crewmembers under a B-17 at Plains des Gaiacs, New Caledonia.



Joaquin taking a shower and in front of his tent in Espiritu Santo



Unknown Crew men in front of their tent and with local natives on Plains des Gaiacs N.C.



Unknown Officer with local Native on New Caledonia and a Policeman for Suva Fiji.



View from the navigator's chair (his shadow silhouette is visible) and unknown radio operator (Jesse Olmsted?)

New Zealand in November

November 1, 1942

Cargo – Santos to New Caledonia. {Ship #213, Buttons to PdG. 1405 1730}. FT = 3:10

November 2, 1942

Cargo – N.C. to Santos with footlockers + Officers mess equipment. {Ship #213, Tontouta to Buttons} FT = 3:00

November 3, 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall and 4 other ships were on striking but did not take off.

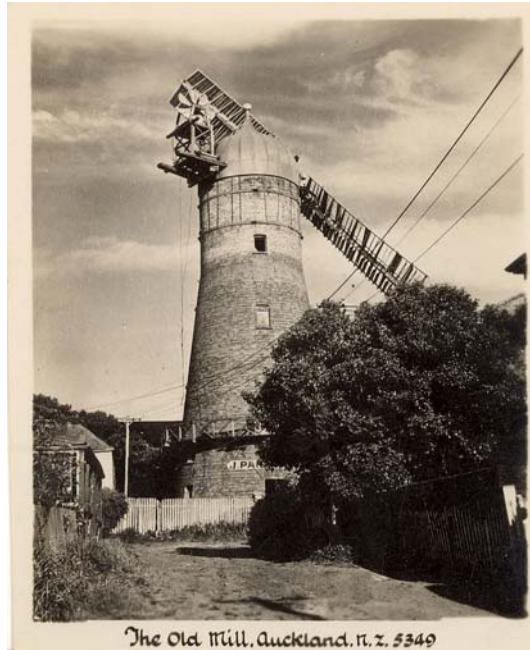
November 4, 1942

Left for Auckland New Zealand for a rest.

Auckland here we come!



Joaquin with unknown lady and two officers (upper Left) Unknown couple and man.



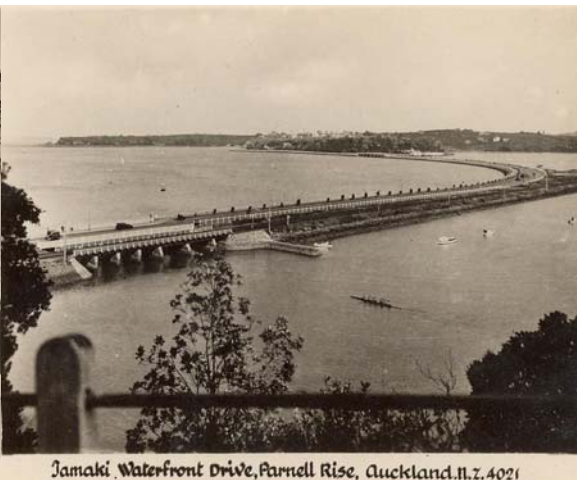
Downtown Auckland New Zealand (above), Unknown Officer (M/L), "The Old Mill" (M/R) Burns Memorial and Museum Lower Left, Railway Station on right.



Queen St. on the left and a view from Mt. Eden on the right



Albert Park showing the University of Auckland on left and Victoria St. on the right.



Queen St. showing Town Hall and Tamaki Waterfront Dr., Farwell Rise.



Queens St. Showing G.P.O. on the left and Welleslay St. on the right.

November 25, 1942

Search (24) – Search out of Santos – {No Mission Report} FT = 12:00

Notes from Journal written on this day:

Heinkel – 113 – (comparable to P-39) – Max. Speed 400 mph ceiling reported at 40,000 ft. liquid cooled, retractable radiator, armor plated on back pilot, 1-20 mm cannon firing through shaft propeller, and two machine guns (comp. to our own 30 cal.) firing at roots of each wing. Most vulnerable from below.

Junker 87- Germany – Dive Bomber specialized in diving, bombing and not much for anything else. Max speed 240 mph. 1 bomb between landing gear 1,150#. 2- bombs on each wing.

Footnote: It is unknown why he was taking notes on German planes. Perhaps there came word of transferring him or crew to the European Theater or the Japanese were using German Equipment?



Heinkel 113 (Bib.# 60)



Junker Ju-87 (Bib. #61)

**“All men are born equal but all soldiers are not equal”
Joaquin Castro**

**“Oceans of Love to you and a prayer on each Wave.”
“Pretty nice eh?”
Joaquin Castro**

November 28, 1942

Search (25) – Search out of Santos (887:25 according to Operations) – {Ship #403, searched out 750 mi. Cont: None.} FT = 12:15



Japanese Prisoners of War from Guadalcanal.

Another Christmas Away from Home

One can only imagine what goes through a soldier's mind knowing he will not be home for Christmas. I know in my heart that each of them celebrated in their own special way or with comrades in arms. So the next time you hear a loved one complain about the stuffing not being tasty, look them straight in the eye and say, "Merry Christmas from those that gave up their lives for you to have an opinion!" As my Dad would say, "If you cannot say anything good about something or someone then just keep your mouth shut."

In the month of December Joaquin logged personal entries in his journal. No entries for any other month are noted unfortunately. They will be added to this section in a different text style and the day of the week next to the date so that it does not conflict with the flight log entries.

12-1-42: (Tuesday)

Spent another day in my tent writing letters and what-have you, Gertrudes, I wrote you another letter, so I hope you are satisfied- I have an idea that you are really having a good time with the III of the Perez family.

12-2-42: (Wednesday)

This makes about the 4th day I spend on the ground Gertrudes, and I am telling you I much rather fly than sit here with an idle mind, - I sleep thinking about you and all the things that go with you and the best I can do is write to you. There are some rumors floating around that are of our boy, Major Messerschmitt, he was promoted while we were in Auckland. He is taking his ship to Hickam- I'll try and send my pictures with him and he can mail them from there.

December 3, 1942

Search (26) – Search out of Santos – {Ship #431, Out 500 mi. Cont: None.}
FT = 12:15

12-3-42: (Thursday)

Finally, we flew this time- Search of course, so my day started at 0300 of the morning. We took off at 0400, searched the extreme right hand side of Solomon's and Lord Howe Is. – contacted one friendly destroyer, landed at 1600, tired! – and home. We had a bad plane- slow and old and then the A.F.C.E (automatic pilot) went out coming home and flew manually thereon. I'll probably sleep like a baby tonight- although I still have the tropical itch.

12-4-42: (Friday)

Well, another day at home recuperating I guess from yesterday, Gertrudes. We had a lecture on filling out weather forms however. I might say that Major Messerschmitt left today for Hawaii. He was our operations officer and now Captain Hall is our operations officer. Since he is our airplane commander and if I know Hall we will be doing more flying that we have hereto. I'm beginning to wonder if he ever is going to get around to checking me out, that's the only way I'll ever get my Captaincy you know Darling. I would love to be a "Capitan" when I go over and see you. I sent some of my O.D. uniforms to Hawaii to be cleaned and pressed so I can have some clean clothes when I take off for my brown eyes. I might say that I received a letter from you today dated Oct. 17, 42. I am answering today if don't mind. Answer your letter tonight and Gertrudes write to Oahu.

December 5, 1942

Ship #213, Captain Hall, and four other ships were all on striking but did not take off.

12-5-42: (Saturday)

Well "G" another day gone. Today it was Striking Day -1- hour alert. Today I wrote you, father and mother, Perez family, Gollo and Othon Jr. Nothing unusual today. Rained day and night.

December 6, 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall, and four other ships were all on striking but did not take off.

12-6-42: (Sunday)

Striking 1-hour. I am going crazy staying here in this tent day in and day out. Do not feel so hot today. A very wet day at that too.

December 7, 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall, and three other ships were all on striking but did not take off.

12-7-42: (Monday)

Striking -1-hour. Nothing unusual today.

December 8, 1942

Ship #444, Capt. Hall, and three other ships were all on striking but did not take off.

12-8-42: (Tuesday)

Striking in planes- went on at 3:00 this morning, heard we were bombing the Japs, but we did not take off. Staples went to hospital.

December 9, 1942

Bombing (27) – Bombed Munda air field with 100 # bombs and landed at Guadalcanal. {Ship #444, and Ship #431, Capt Hensley. Dropped all the bombs on Munda Pt. Airport in formation. All the bombs hit on the runway. 3” AA altitude was fine but the deflection was off. Landed at Cactus (both ships). FT = 8:00

12-9-42: (Wednesday)

Took off today after being on the alert since three this morning, we took off at five and bombed Jap airfield at Munda Point, on the top of New Georgia. Bombed from 7500 ft. and bombs went right on the airfield, no fighter opposition, light anti-aircraft fire. 18 planes bombed this time. Landed at Guadalcanal. Staples came down with Malaria and went to hospital.

December 10, 1942

Bombing (28) – Bombed Shortland from Guadalcanal – Tanker – 1000 # bombs. {Ship #444, Ship #431, Capt. Hensley: Capt. Hall leading five ships formation, Capt. Hensley in #2 position. Bombed large tanker with 4-1000 lb. bombs each, in Tenolei Harbor. Had escort of 4 P-38’s. Scored one direct hit on the stern and several near misses. Heavy AA, altitude good but the deflection slightly off. Five enemy fighters one of which made attack and damaged an engine on #4 ship in the formation (Capt. Thomas). Fighter that made the attack was shot down by P-38 as he cleared the bomber formation. Lt. Whiteley of this Squadron flew as Co-pilot with Capt. Darby in ship #059, in #3 position.} FT = 5:50

12-10-42: (Thursday)

Took off from Guadalcanal at 9:30 with (8)-P38’s, fighter escort to bomb enemy shipping at Shortland. Scored direct hits on tanker, straddled another, heavy anti-aircraft fire, and attacked by Zeros. No damage no casualties- 1-P-38 shot down 5 Zeros. Landed at Guadalcanal.

December 11, 1942

Bombing (29) – Bombed Munda Air field from Guadalcanal with 100# bombs. {Capt. Hall in Ship #444, and Capt. Hensley Ship #431 went out from Cactus on the following bombing missions: Capt. Hall in #2 position

and Capt. Hensley in #3 position with Capt. Sullivan leading bombed Munda Pt. Airfield with 20-100 lb. bombs each, from 18,000'. Hits not observed because of clouds just past bomb release line. Believe all bombs hit on land which would necessitate their reaching the target. No AA or fighter interception}. FT=5:15

12-11-42: (Friday)

Took off again from Guadalcanal at 1030, again (8) P-38 escort to bomb Munda with 100 pounders. Hits observed on field, no A.A, no fighter opposition, returned to Santos.

12-12-42: (Saturday)

I had the day off today, which was a good thing because I found some letters from you when I got home last night and I have answered most of them today. Now I am writing this so that you may take a look at it some day during the day of the 11th. One of the boys on search ran into fifteen Zeros, shot down five and they killed his co-pilot. They shot his #1 and 2 engines.

December 13, 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall along with Ship #403, Capt. Sorensen were striking but did not take off.

12-13-42: (Sunday)

Day off- Spent most of the day in bed- reading and writing letters. Life kind of dull- however it will be different tomorrow- going to bomb Munda again- wish me luck "G".

December 14, 1942

Bombing (30) – Bombed Munda Air field from Santos with 100# bombs- refueled Guadalcanal – Santo. {Ship #213, Bombing mission. Loaded with 10-100 lb. bombed Munda Pt. airfield. Dropped all bombs to the right of the runway at about a 20 degree angle. Lost formation due to bad weather and made the bombing run alone. Landed Cactus to refuel and returned to Buttons.} FT = 12:35

12-14-42: (Monday)

Got out of bed 3:00 this morning, took off at 4:30 with ten 100 pounders with seven other ships to bomb Munda. Ran into a bad storm, - lost formation in storm flying instruments at 300 feet above the water- continued to target alone- bombed airfield, no fighter opposition, light anti-aircraft fire.

12-15-42: (Tuesday)

Day off today again- received letter from home and you- went to finance office and got my pay. Meant to write but didn't get around. Going to bomb again tomorrow and stay at Guadalcanal for the next three days.

December 16, 1942

Bombing (31) – Bombed Munda Air Field from Santos with 100# bombs and returned to Guadalcanal – Hyland shot down. {The following ships took off from Buttons 0700 for Bombing: Ship # 487, Capt. Levy; Ship #631, Capt Hyland; Ship #123, Capt. Hensley; Ship #213, Capt. Hall; Ship #403, Capt. Steedman; Ship #415, Lieut. Thomas – Target: Munda Pt. airfield. On the way to the airfield Capt. Steadman lost the formation and the five remaining planes went on without him. A total of 99 – 100 lb. bombs were dropped by the five ships. All bombs hit in the middle of the target. Attacked by 12 Zeros on the way out after dropping the bombs. Damage to own planes and personnel: #122, Prop control cable shot up. #415, Lt. Thomas lost #4 engine and #213, Capt. Hall got a 20 mm. hit in the left wing and 7.7 in bomb bay oxygen system. Sgt. Stevenson Capt. Hall's crew was hit in the left shoulder by a 7.7 and continued to operate the radio. Ship #321 Capt. Hyland, was shot down. Right after the Captain made a water landing a message was sent to Buttons requesting a PB Y for rescue, reply to which was "amplify." (BIG HELP). At this point Sgt Steadman rejoined the formation and the ships all returned to Cactus. Capt. Hensleys crew claims 3 Zeros this mission.} FT = 7:40

Second Mission

Bombing (32) – Bombed Munda Air field from Guadalcanal with 100# bombs. { Ship #487, Capt. Hall; Ship #437, Capt. Brewer; Ship #214, Capt. Charters; Ship #403, Capt. Steedman. All ships reloaded with 20-100 lb. bombs and took off (1600) to bomb supply dump and bivouac area to NE of runway at Munda Pt. Clouds interfered with bombing runs but bombs believed dropped in target area. Had fighter escort of 8-P38's. No aerial opposition and very little AA. Landed Cactus.} FT = 3:00

12-16-42: (Wednesday)

Took off from Santos with six ship formation at 0700 with us leading the formation loaded with 20 100# to bomb Munda point. Capt. Steadman left formation to investigate surface vessels. Bombed Munda at 1145, light A.A. but were attacked by 16 Zeros immediately after finishing bombing run. In first pass made at us by two Zeros, Oxygen system was shot out and our Radio Operator was shot through the shoulder. In same pass, Capt. Hyland's #1&2 engines were shot out and he eventually had to land

in the water on the way to Guadalcanal. It seems that he was unable to feather with one of his engines. Our ship 213 had 20mm hole through the left wing and a few holes through fuselage. Three Zeros were shot down by the formation. Hyland's crew was picked up that afternoon by a PBY. Landed at Guadalcanal at 1340 and took off again at 1600 with five ships to bomb Munda again- this time we had P-38 protection. Bombed airfield and returned to Guadalcanal just before dark.

December 17, 1942

Bombing (33) – Bombed Munda Air Field from Guadalcanal with 100# bombs. {Took off at 0600. Ship #487, with 5 others, Loaded with 8-500 lb. bombs the six ships went after the runway at Munda Pt. 1st. Flight dropped their bombs to the left of the runway. The 2nd flight dropped four bombs on the runway and the remainder on to the left of the runway. Capt. Brewers bombs failed to release and his bombsight was out and he then came up and got on Capt. Halls wing. Three more runs were made and on the final run all the bombs were dropped. No aerial opposition and little AA. Landed Cactus at 0930.} FT = 3:35

12-17-42: (Thursday)

Bombing – Took off from Guadalcanal at 0500 and bombed Munda with five ships and P-38's and Grumman escort. Light AA and scored hits on the target at 13500ft.- the place is pretty much of a mess. No fighter opposition with P-38's sitting up there above us. Returned to Guadalcanal.

December 18, 1942

Bombing (34) – Bombed Munda Air Field from Guadalcanal with 100# bombs. {Ship #487, with four others. All ships loaded with 20-100 lb. bombs. Took off from Cactus at 0530. Capt. Charters lost prop governor at 0900 and returned to Cactus. Went after supply dump and bivouac area. The weather on the way to the target was rotten and finally managed to get above and around it. At the target, the weather was good. A total of 80 bombs were dropped in the target area covering it thoroughly. Subsequent reports from Coast Watcher reported main supply dump hit, ammunition dump hit, and camp ground of 500 men. Had fighter escort of 8-P38s but lost contact with them prior to the bombing. No aerial opposition and very little AA. All ships returned safely to Cactus.} FT = 3:50

12-18-42: (Friday)

Bombing – Took off at 0700 with 4 ships and fighter escort and bombed Munda again. That place is taking a night and day bombing. Returned to Guadalcanal.

December 19, 1942

(C-X) – Return to Santos. {The following all returned from Cactus (to Buttons) this date: Ship #487, Capt. Hall; Ship #132, Capt. Hensley; Ship #415, Lieut. Thomas.} FT = 5:00

12-19-42: (Saturday)

The 42nd was ordered back to Santos and brought back our two wingmen – the rest of the ships already being sent home for repairs- our ship included.

12-20-42: (Sunday)

Day off – Found out today that Lt. Staples has developed some complications with his malaria and is going to be sent to New Zealand for treatment. Now I won't have anybody to fight with. He and I were always arguing about something- he was or rather is a funny man. Yesterday when I got back I found letters from you, folks, Mr. Lopez from Honolulu, and Miss Ross from New Zealand, Heard all kinds of rumors today- most of us keep going on rumors- most of the boys that came here when the Solomon's campaign, seem to think too that we will get relieved as soon as we have had our six months here- well that means will be January 18- two day after your birthday "G". However, I am not banking on that at all- since I have had too many disappoints already.

12-21-42: (Monday)

Striking Nothing Doing

12-22-42: (Tuesday)

Day off again. Wrote you some letters and the folks.

December 23, 1942

Search (35) – Searched Santos- sighted empty lifeboat + debris. {Ship # 227, Out 800 mi. Cont.: None.} FT = 11:20

12-23-42: (Wednesday)

Search Mission – Searched extreme right of Solomon's on a hot day. We had sighted an empty lifeboat and debris- probably ship sunk near here. Took off at 0430 landed 1750. A search mission always makes me hungry and tired and that's why I like them coming like this- I mean every third day or so- I'll sleep like a baby tonight.

12-24-42: (Thursday)
Day off- spent it asleep.

12-25-42: (Friday)
Nothing doing today except that we had some party last night.

December 26, 1942
Search (36) – Searched Santos – No contacts. {Ship #442, searched. Out 800 miles. Contact: None.} FT = 11:15

12-26-42: (Saturday)
Search – Searched out of Santos and made no contacts

12-27-42: (Sunday)
Day off – received letters from you and the folks. Understand we are going to help MaCarthur's men tomorrow at Port Morsby- have finished packing my bag because I understand we are to stay there a few days- maybe- See you later Darling- I hope!

December 28, 1942
(C-X) – Santos to Guadalcanal. {No Mission Report} FT = 4:40

12-28-42: (Monday)
Took off for Guadalcanal at about 0700 ready for a weeks stay at Port Morsby. Landed there to find Holmes flying P-38's.

December 29, 1942
(C-X) – Guadalcanal to Port Moresby. {The following named combat crews left for Port Moresby this date:
Major Manierre; Ship #122, Capt. Puerta; Ship #413, Capt. Hall; Ship #643, Capt. Hensley; Ship #437, Capt. Sorensen; Ship #415, Capt. Steedman.
Lt. O. D. Thomas in Ship #428 was reported as having not returned from a search mission. It is believed that he was attacked by Zeros and possibly shot down.} FT = 5:45.

12-29-42: (Tuesday)
Took for Port Morsby at 0900, landed with six-ship formation. The 261st squad, And 42nd squad, were ordered to Port Morsby to bomb Rabaul. Not a very nice place they have, bad mess and conditions are bad all over.

12-30-42: (Wednesday)
Hearing a lot of talk as to the kind of missions we are going to pull out of here- Still raining here.

12-31-42: (Thursday)

Going out tonight on bombing mission and the way the boys talk about the weather here plus the mountains- Well I don't like it very much.



P-38 Lightning (Bib. #62)

Footnote: The P-38 was built by Lockheed Aircraft Corp. It has two Allison V-1710-49 12-cylinder V liquid-cooled, 1,250 hp (ea.) engines. Its wingspan is 52 ft. (15.85 m), its length is 37' 10" (11.53 m), its height is 9' 10" (2.99 m), its weight is 20,000 lbs. (9,065 kg) loaded, a max. speed of 395 mph (636 km/h) at 25,000 ft. (7,620 m), a ceiling of 39,000 ft. (11,880 m), a range of 1,425 miles (2,000 km), an armament of 1 x 20 mm cannon and 4 machine guns and can carry 2,000 lbs of bombs (900 kg).

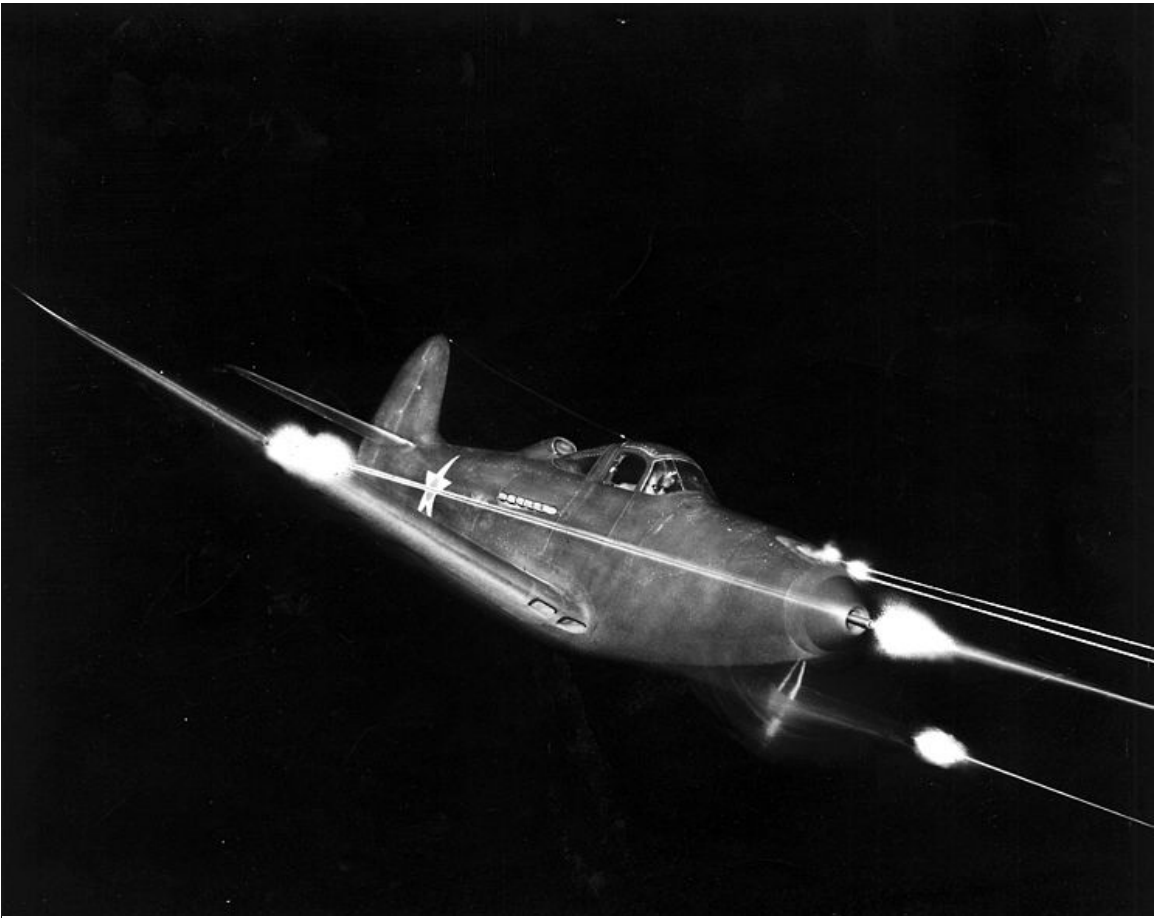


Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat (Bib.# 63)

Footnote: Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp. built Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat. It has a Pratt & Whitney R-1830-86 Twin Wasp 14-cylinder radial air-cooled 1,200 hp engine. Its wingspan is 38 ft. (11.58 m), a length of 28'9" (8.76 m), a height of 11'10" (3.60 m), a weight of 7,952 lbs. (3,560 kg) loaded, a max speed of 318 mph (512 km/h) at 19,400 ft. (5,900 m), a ceiling of 34,900 miles (10,640 km), a range of 770 miles (1,240 km), and an armament of 6 machine guns with a bomb load of 200 lbs. (91 kg).



P-40 War Hawks on the flight line on an Island in the Pacific. (Bib. #64)



P-39 Airacobra firing its weapons at night (Bib. # 65)



Aloha Tower November 1941 upon arrival

Final Days

January 1943 will be the last month Joaquin flies for our freedom until the ill-fated mission on February 1, 1943. Ironically, reports indicate that a week after Joaquin and his crew were lost the squadron was given orders to return to Hickam, Hawaii to train new officers and change over to the B-24 Liberator.

January 1, 1943

Bombing – Night mission bombing out of Port Morsby, bad weather. *{No mission Report}*. FT = 4:30

January 4, 1943

Bombing – Bombing Rabaul out of P.M., bad weather. *{No Mission Report}*. FT = 6:45

January 5, 1943

(C-X) – Returned to Guadalcanal. *{No Missions Report}*. FT = 5:30

General Orders # 8: *Award of the Air Medal*: January 5, 1943: JOAQUIN CASTRO, (0-428914), First Lieutenant, United States Army Air Corps, for meritorious achievement in air operations against the enemy on August 16, 1942 [**wrong date noted**], in the Solomon Island area. Lieutenant Castro as crew member of a heavy bombardment airplane on a search mission, participated in an attack upon a Japanese four-engine flying boat which was sighted and engaged at a point about 50 miles northwest of Gizo Island, approximately 45 minutes, finally being shot down by Lieutenant Castro and other members of the crew. Immediately following this action, their airplane was attacked by an enemy fighter, which made one pass, secured two hits on the left wing and then pursued, out of range, for approximate 50 miles before turning away.

January 6, 1943

Bombing (37) – Bombed Shortland Harbor from Guadalcanal. *{No Missions Report}*. FT = 4:50.

Footnote: At some time between Jan 7-11, there had to have been a mission to transfer command (C-X). Joaquin's next entry (six days later) states a mission from Espiritu Santo (Buttons). Though my uncle did not note it in his journal and there is not a mission report to confirm, it had to have happened. The only evidence of a ship transferring from Guadalcanal to Santos came from a Missions Report stating: Ship #128, Capt. Puerta

Cactus to Buttons. Consequently, other ships had to follow on that day or on a later date.

January 12, 1943

Search – Searched out of Santos – No contacts. {Ship #442, Search. Out 800 mi. Cont: None}. FT = 11:00

January 13, 1943

General Orders #53 **Award for the Silver Star**. This Document was in Joaquin's military personal file from St. Louis. However, the copy I received did not have the names of the soldiers receiving the award. The Military Personal Office is searching for another copy with the names and the reason why earned but the fire on July of 1973 may have destroyed it. This is also the day the 7th Air Force changed to the 13th Air Force.

January 14, 1943

Compass Swing – Swing Compass on #213 – Storm - from Santos. {*No Missions Report*}. FT = 1:45.

January 16, 1943

Search – Search from Santos to Pelton, Australia. {Ship #213, Searched. Out 800 miles. Contacts none.} FT = 10:40

January 23, 1943

General Orders – G.O. #4 – 11th Bomb Group awarded the **DUC-Army (Distinguished Unit Citation = Presidential Unit Citation)**. For action between July 31- November 30, 1942.

January 24, 1943

Search – Search from Santos to Carper, Australia. {Ship #520, Searched. Out 800 mi. Cont: Own task Force.} FT = 11:30

January 27, 1943

Search – Search for lost crew from Santos to G.I. (Georgia Island). {Ship #415, Ship #156, Capt. Hensley Ship #054, Capt. Sowers. The three ships all went out on a Special Search Mission. The mission being to try to locate Ship #403 which was forced down at sea. No contacts or planes sighted by any of the above.} FT = 9:15

January 29, 1943

Ship #151, Capt. Hall. Buttons to Cactus

February 1, 1943

Mission report: The following three crews went on a bombing mission and failed to return. Captain's Hall, Hensley and Houx.

Casualty Report: Castro, Joaquin – 0428914- 1st Lt. – Place: Vicinity Shortland Harbor Solomon Islands (SPA-South Pacific Area). Remarks: No. 4114 Espiritu Santo (SPA) Gravy. Notify Crispin Castro (Father). (42 Bomb Sq Heavy 11 Bomb Gp. Heavy). Action by Casualty Branch: Report forwarded to Missing.

Report of Change Card – 0-428914, 1st Lt. AC Castro, Joaquin – 42nd Bomb Sq. (H) – Base: Button – Duty to Missing in Action Shortland Harbor Area Solomon Islands as of 1 Feb. 43.

CASUALTY MESSAGE

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM	WAR DEPARTMENT
BUREAU	AGO
	JFC 4609

AG 201 CASTRO JOAQUIN (2-3-43) SPAFC-G 040090-1 (2) FEBRUARY 10 1943
ASN C-428914

MR CRISPIN CASTRO
527 WEST SEVENTH STREET
MISSION TEXAS

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR SON FIRST LIEUTENANT JOAQUIN CASTRO AIR CORPS HAS BEEN REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION IN SOUTH PACIFIC AREA SINCE FEBRUARY 1 PERIOD ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WILL BE SENT YOU WHEN RECEIVED



OFFICIAL: *NF*
Noel F. Tharalson
ADJUTANT GENERAL

ULIO
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

1943

AG 704.1 ()

FILE (NAME)
Castro 4609
CASUALTY BRANCH (DATE)



77	0461	215	4208	001106					01023	0-428914	CASTR
TYPE	STATION	TYPE ORG.	UNIT	PARENT UNIT	SPECL.	GRADE	DUTY	A. OR S.	DATE	SERIAL NUMBER	NAME
REPORT OF CHANGE (FOR INDIVIDUAL OR UNIT)											
BASIC STATUS											
0-428914 1st Lt AC											
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASSIGNED <input type="checkbox"/> ATTACHED (UNASSIGNED) <input type="checkbox"/> ATTACHED (T.M.) <input type="checkbox"/> CASUAL											
1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON DUTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY):											
2 DUTY OR OTHER STATUS AT TIME OF THIS CHANGE											
3 DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE											
4 Duty to Missing in Action Shortland Harbor											
5 Area Solomon Islands as of 1 Feb 43											
6											
7											
8											
REPORT FOR THE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS ENDING AT 11:59 P.M. DAY 16 MONTH Feb 1943											
AUTHENTICATING OFFICER HARRY ASHKLAZE Capt AC Pers Off											
TYPE OF CHANGE STATION TYPE ORGANIZ'N SUB-UNIT PARENT UNIT SPECL. GRADE DUTY ARM OR SERVICE NAME, GRADE AND TITLE											
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80											

February 19, 1943

Inventory of Personal Effects: (All items sent to his Father)

Leather Portfolio, 1- Comb and Brush set, 1- Picture Framed, 1- Leather Bag (Personal papers), 2- Wallets (Empty), 1- Pouch (Chain and Insignia), 1 – piece Fiji Jewelry, 1- Box miscellaneous, 1- Diary, 2- Bibles, 2- Leather cases, 1- Fountain Pen, 1- Bottle Holy Water, pictures (personal), 1- raincoat, 1- Jacket, 1- Pr. Gabardine Pants, 1- Pr. Pants, C.K.C., 1- Gabardine shirt, 2- Shirts C.K.C., 1- Officer's Blouse, 1- Kodak, 1- Dictionary (English), 1- Dictionary (Spanish), 1- Dictionary (French), 1- Pr. Swimming trunks, 1- shoe shine kit, 1- Box of Monogram Soap, 1- Pr. Ray Ban Sunglasses, 3- rolls of unexposed film, 1- mirror, 1- Pr. Shoes (oxford), Misc. Toilet Articles.

March 7, 1943

General Orders #55: **Award of the Oak Leaf Cluster (Air Medal)** to Personnel Missing in Action: By direction of the President, under the provisions of Executive Order 9158 (Bul. No. 25, W.D., 1942), a bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of an additional Air Medal is awarded by the Commanding General, United States Army Forces in the South Pacific Area, to each of the following officers and enlisted men missing in action: **JOAQUIN CASTRO**, (0-428914), First Lieutenant, United States Army Air Corps, for meritorious achievement while participating in an air flight on December 16, 1942, over the Solomon Islands. Lieutenant Castro was co-pilot for his flight leader on a successful bombing mission with six B-17 airplanes; Sixteen enemy fighters attacked the formation. Wingman #3 was disabled early in the encounter and the bomber in which Lieutenant Castro

was a crewmember, with the remainder of the formation, stayed over and to the rear of the disabled bomber, thereby preventing the complete destruction and loss of number 3 wingman which finally crashed landed with little injury to the members of its crew. These crewmembers were later rescued. At least four enemy fighters were destroyed.

Footnote: Air Medal and Oak Leaf Cluster were sent to his Father since Joaquin was still listed as Missing in Action.

April 21, 1943

General Orders # 97: **Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross** (To Personnel Missing In Action): By direction of the President, under the provisions of the Act of Congress approved July 2, 1926, (Bul. No. 8, W.D., 1926), the Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded by the Commanding General, United States Army Forces in the South Pacific Area, to the following named officers and enlisted men missing in action: **JOAQUIN CASTRO**, (0-428914), First Lieutenant, United States Army Air Corps, for extraordinary achievement in the Solomon Islands while participating, in the period from December 7, 1941, to January 10, 1943, in 63 operational air flights totaling over 633 hours, during which exposure to enemy fire was probable and expected.

February 22, 1944

Missing Status Direction from the War Department Adj. General Office Washington D.C.: Pursuant to Section 5 of Public Law 490, 77th Congress, as amended, and following a full review of all available information, upon direction and delegation by the Secretary of War, the Chief, Casualty Branch, A.G.O. this 2nd day of February 1944 finds First Lieutenant Joaquin Castro, Army Serial Number 0-428914, Air Corps, who was officially reported as missing (in action) as of the 1st day of February 1943, when the plane of which he was a crewmember failed to return from a bombing mission in the South Pacific Area, to be presumed to be living, and directs that he be continued in the status of missing (in action) as provided by law.

September 14, 1944

Letter from Notification Branch:

I am writing you with reference to your son, First Lieutenant Joaquin Castro, who was reported by the Adjutant General as missing in the vicinity of the Solomon Islands since February 1, 1943.

Further information has been received indicating that Lieutenant Castro was a crewmember of a B-17 (Flying Fortress) bomber which departed from Guadalcanal on a bombardment mission to Munda on Feb. 1, 1943. Details are not available, the report indicating that your son's bomber was not seen

or contacted after it left its base and that the circumstances surrounding its disappearance are unknown. A search was instituted but up to the present time, no information has been received concerning the disappearance of your son or his bomber.

For your information, I am inclosing a list of those who were in the plane and the names and addresses of their next of kin.

Please be assured that a continuing search by land, sea, and air is being made to discover the whereabouts of our missing personnel. As our armies advance over enemy occupied territory, special troops are assigned to this task, and all agencies of the government in every country are constantly sending in details, which aid us in bringing additional information to you.

November 1, 1944

Promotion: To First Lieutenant Joaquin Castro, 0428914, AUS.

1. The President, on this date, promoted you to the grade of First Lieutenant, Air Corps Reserve, in the Army of the United States, under the provisions of Public Law 97, 77th Congress, and Section 37, National Defense Act, as amended.
2. Neither an acceptance nor an oath of office is necessary, as this promotion will be regarded as having been accepted on this date. A commission evidencing this promotion will be issued. However, if you are serving overseas when this commission is mailed, it will be mailed to your nearest relative for safekeeping.
3. If you are now serving under a commission of an equivalent or higher temporary grade in the Army of the United States or in the Army of the United States-Air Corps, you will continue to serve under that commission.
4. Two copies of this letter are attached, as this promotion will not be announced in War Department Special Orders.

Footnote: I found this to be very strange considering the amount of mission flight hours logged, before his final mission, and it is just now, 27 months later, that he is promoted to full 1st Lieutenant. Other officers that worked with Joaquin rose up the ranks faster. One officer was promoted from 1st Lt. to Captain in a matter of 4 months. I realize that I am a civilian looking from the outside in, however, it was Joaquin that wrote in his journal, "wondering when he was going to be "Checked Out" so he could become a Captain" in Dec of 1942. He knew it was his time. I recently asked the Air Force Department for a posthumous promotion for Captain be granted to Joaquin. I presented the Review Board at Randolph AFB in San Antonio, TX and Andrews AFB in Baltimore, MD with all evidences I presently have that clearly shows, in my opinion, his eligibility of such a request. Yet, it was denied.

Andrews AFB supported the evidence I gave them and felt he was qualified yet they declined the request because no OFFICIAL document supported my request. My fight continues despite this setback. Correspondence from living veterans and family from Joaquin's crew and squadron have assured me that they were truly a "Band of Brothers". There only thoughts were to fight together for the common good for our country and to fight in remembrance of those lost at Pearl Harbor. Through this, a strong bond of family developed and animosity was not an issue. Especially, among the members of this Bomb Group. This special bond continues with my new brothers of Hal Hall, Gregg Heilman, Phil Gudenschwager, Paul Stephens, Paul and Art Adler, and Dr. Joe Goepfner. All good men that have taken the time to share their stories, research, and experiences with me so I could piece together and record as accurate as possible the information in this biography.

January 11, 1946

Letter to his mother from Casualty Branch

Dear Mrs. Castro,

Since your son, First Lieutenant Joaquin Castro, 0428914, Air Corps, was reported missing in action 1 February 1943, the War Department has entertained the hope that he survived and that information would be revealed dispelling the uncertainty surrounding his absence. However, as in many cases, the conditions of warfare deny us such information. Public Law 490, 77th Congress, as amended, provides for a review and determination of the status of each person who has been missing in action for twelve months. Accordingly, your son's case was reviewed and h was continued in the status of missing in action as of 2 February 1944. The law further provides that a subsequent review the making of a finding of death is authorized.

All available records and reports concerning the absence of your son have been carefully investigated and are deemed to warrant a subsequent review of his case. Information in the hands of the War Department indicates that your son was a crewmember of a B-17 (Fortress) aircraft, which departed an advance base in the Solomon Islands on 1 February 1943 on a mission to bomb an enemy airfield on Munda in the southwestern part of that group of Islands. The plane was proceeding over enemy held territory on this mission and failed to return to its base. No trace of our son has been found since that time.

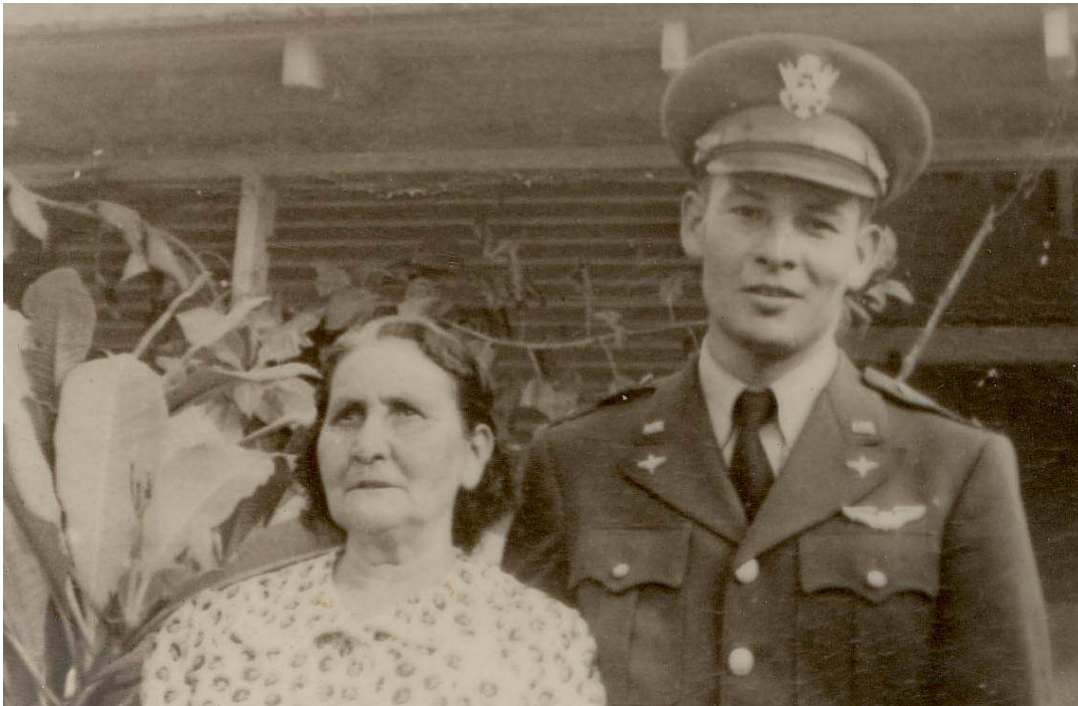
Since no information has been received, which would support a presumption of his continued survival the War Department must now terminate your son's absence by a presumptive finding of Death. Accordingly, an official finding of death has bee recorded. The finding does not establish an actual or probable date of death; however, as

required by law, it includes a presumptive date of death for the purpose of termination of pay and allowances, settlement of accounts and payment of death gratuities. In the case of your son, this date has been set as 11 January 1946.

I regret the necessity for this message but trust that the ending of a long period of uncertainty may give at least some small measure of consolation. An appraisal of the sacrifice made by your son in the service of his country compels in us feelings of humility and respect. May Providence grant a measure of relief from the anguish and anxiety you have experienced during these many months.

Sincerely yours

Major General Edward F. Witsell
Acting the Adjutant General of the Army



One can only imagine the grief in this Mother's heart knowing her son was not coming home and the War was already declared over September 2, 1945.

WAR DEPARTMENT
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

405-A

FINDING OF DEATH OF MISSING PERSON

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 5 of the Act of 7 March 1942 (Public Law 490 77th Cong.) as amended, upon direction and delegation by The Secretary of War, The Chief, Casualty Branch, The Adjutant General's Office, finds First Lieutenant Joaquin Castro, Army Serial Number 0428914, Air Corps,

to be dead. He was officially reported as missing in action as of the 1st day of February 1943. For the purposes stated in said Act, death is presumed to have occurred on the 11th day of January, 1946.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR

George F. Hebert

ADJUTANT GENERAL
CHIEF, CASUALTY BRANCH

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

AREA Pacific	FLYING STATUS Yes	JUMP STATUS No	LINE OF DUTY Yes	OWN MIS-CONDUCT No	ON DUTY STATUS Yes	ABSENCE AUTH'D
PREVIOUS REVIEWS Continued in a missing in action status as of 2 February 1944.						
DATE OF BIRTH 18 Jul 1916	HOME ADDRESS Mission, Texas	DATE OF ENTRY ON CURRENT ACTIVE SERVICE 1 Nov 1941	LENGTH OF SERVICE (AS OF PRESUMED DATE OF DEATH)			
		YEARS		MONTH		DAYS

EMERGENCY ADDRESSEE

NAME Mr. Crispin C. Castro	RELATIONSHIP Father	ADDRESS 527 West Seventh Street Mission, Texas
-------------------------------	------------------------	--

* BENEFICIARIES

NAME Mrs. Romana S. Castro	RELATIONSHIP Mother	ADDRESS 522 West Seventh Street Mission, Texas
NAME Mr. Crispin C. Castro	RELATIONSHIP Father	ADDRESS 527 West Seventh Street Mission, Texas

REMARKS

Distribution 56

*Beneficiaries designated while an enlisted man.

Circumstances of Disappearance: Crew member of a Fortress aircraft which failed to return from a bombing mission over Munda.

ASN as EM: 18,022,986

February 28, 1946

Letter sent to Father by a General:

Dear Mr. Castro,

With greatest regret, I have learned that an official determination has been made of the death of your son, First Lieutenant Joaquin Castro, who has been missing in action since February 1, 1943, in the Pacific Ocean Area.

It has come to my notice that Lieutenant Castro was a faithful and diligent officer throughout his career in the Army Air Forces. A reputation for energy and perseverance marked him during training at Luke Field, and when he became a pilot, his worthy performance as an airman brought him the well-deserved approval of superiors. He was esteemed by those with whom he served, and comrades feel that they have sustained a great loss in his passing.

I hope that pride in the achievements of your son and the knowledge that he bravely and willingly gave his utmost for our cause will in some degree help to make your grief easier to bear.

My heartfelt sympathy is offered to you and other members of the family in behalf of General H.H. Arnold, Commanding General, Army Air Forces, who is temporarily away from Headquarters.

Sincerely yours,
Carl Spaatz
General, United States Army

1948 - The 11th BG was awarded the Navy DUC . (General Orders #73 them amended to #78 by DAGO [Department of the Army General Order] for action from August 7 – December 9, 1942. This is the 1st and only time that the Navy issued a DUC to a sister military Group.

***THANK YOU! Joaquin, your crewmates and comrades in arms
for the freedom, you have given all Americans!
God Bless You, your crewmates, your comrades in arms and
God Bless America.***



(Bib. #66)

Final Mission

My research has lead me to find four versions of the final mission. I will rewrite them to allow for a comparison and contrast of the information presented.

Gene Eric Salecker, **Fortress against the Sun**, version:

On February 1, 1943, nine B-17s set out to bomb enemy shipping around Bougainville. Breaking into tow elements, the first element, consisting of five planes from the 72nd BS, set fire to a large cargo ship with tow or three direct hits and several near misses. Following close behind, the second element, made up one 72nd BS and three from the 42nd BS/11th BG, flew through heavy antiaircraft fire to bomb another supply vessel. Midway through the bomb run B-17E (41-9122, *Eager Beavers*), piloted by Capt. Frank L. Houx (42nd BS), was hit in the bomb bay by antiaircraft shell and disintegrated in midair.

After scoring two hits on the enemy ship, the three remaining planes turned back towards Henderson Field but were intercepted by some 20 Zeros. In the ensuing air battle, B-17E (41-2442, *Yokohama Express*), flown by Capt. Harold P. Hensley was attacked repeatedly and seriously damaged, necessitating a water landing. Capt. Hensley and his crew were never seen again. The two remaining planes, flown by Capt. Earl O. Hall, CO of the 42nd BS, and Capt. Thomas, continued to fight off the persistent attackers, shooting down four planes before Capt. Hall's B-17E (41-9151) was shot out of the sky.

All by himself now, Capt. Thomas continued to try to fend off the attackers. The Zeros chased the Flying Fortress for almost 200 miles, seriously wounding the radio operator and bombardier, and knocking out the tail guns, and the ball turret and top turret guns. Two engines were damaged, one main tire was flattened, and all of the ammunition for the nose and radio compartment guns was expended but the B-17 would not go down, after three more Zeros were shot down, the Japanese finally gave up and Capt. Thomas was able to make a successful crash landing on Guadalcanal. Having had a total of only four planes assigned to the 42nd BS, the loss of all four planes and three entire crews effectively eliminated the 42nd BS from any further operations in the South Pacific. (Bib. # 67)

W.M. Cleveland, **Grey Geese Calling**, versions:

42nd Squadron:

February was a fateful month for the Squadron. At the beginning of the month, the strength was four planes and crews, but this total was suddenly reduced to one – in the following manner: Three planes left base to pull a strike against Bougainville, far to the north. These planes

were piloted by Capt. Hall, Capt. Harold P. Hensley and Capt. Frank L. Houx. Although no official word from any of them ever came through, reports from natives of the islands near the target eventually brought out the story. According to these natives, Capt. Houx' plane was hit in the bomb bay by flak, causing the plane to disintegrate in the air. Shortly thereafter, the two remaining planes were jumped by a large number of enemy fighters, and Capt. Hensley's plane was hit, necessitating a water landing. The Japs kept boring in on the Forts and shot both of them down. No survivors were seen to get out of the wreckage. The official order relieving the Eleventh Group from duty was dated 7 February 1943. The operations of the Group in the Solomons Campaign were considered highly effective, and the Presidential Unit Citation was awarded the Eleventh. (*Bib. #68*)

Footnote: Sources also indicate that the 42nd received a Presidential Unit Citation from the Navy for action in the Pacific during 7 August to 9 December.

72nd Squadron:

February 1, 1943, nine ships (B-17s) were dispatched as a striking force against enemy shipping in the Shortland area. The first element was composed of 72nd planes and crews: Major Whitaker, Capts. Thompson, Hawes, Darby, and Rathbun. The second element of four planes included Capts. Hall, Houx, and Hensley of the 42nd Squadron and Capt. Thomas of the 72nd. An Escort of P-40's was furnished by the fighter command. Eight 500 pound bombs were carried. Take off, 1300.

The first element picked as a target a large cargo vessel off Ballale Island, made the run dropping the 40-500's at the vessel in pattern. Two of three hits and several near misses were reported and the ship was said to have been on fire as the planes left the area.

The second element, led by Capt. Hall, used as a target a supply vessel near Tonolei Harbor, across the bay. Two direct hits were scored on this target. After his flight to the left and after the bomb runs were completed, Major Whitaker turned out of the area, as was previously agreed both flights would do. The fighter escort stayed with the first element.

The second element turned right toward Choiseul Bay and was soon attacked by 15 to 25 Zeros. A running battle ensued during which several of the fighters were downed. Three B-17's failed to return from this air battle. Capt. Hensley's plane was seen to go down in flames and was last seen burning on the water and being circled by two Zeros. Capts. Hall and Haux's planes disappeared from the sky and failed to return.

Capt. Thomas and crew fought the Japs half way down the shore of Santa Isabel Island before the attackers decided to call it a day. The plane's guns were out of ammunition and several of the crew were injured when the melee was over. In the meantime, the crew had accounted for three planes. Lt. Howat, wounded, continued firing until he downed one as he passed the nose of the plane. The crew brought the badly shot up plane back to Henderson Field and effected a successful crash landing after one tire of the landing gear was found to have been damaged. (*Bib. # 69*)

Joint Headquarters 5th and the 11th Bomber Groups (H) Forward Echelon, Cactus A-2 Periodic Report by Corcoran Thom Jr. 1st Lt. Air Corps S-2 Officer, Cactus version:

Complete report of Second Element – Bombing Mission 1 February 1943.

The nine ship formation, composed of two elements, the first a five ship Vee, and the second a four ship Vee, took off from GUADALCANAL shortly after 0630 for a bombing mission on enemy shipping in the SHORTLAND – BUIN area.

The pre-arranged plan was to bomb the transports in the SHORTLAND Harbor area, because it was known that a large force of destroyers and cruisers was just off the BUIN –KAHILI coastline. The first element was to take the transport to the right, and the second element the transport to the left.

Upon arrival at the target area, the first element took up a bombing run on the transport to the right of the course of the formation. The second element started a bombing run on the left-hand transport, with bomb-bay doors open, but just before reaching the point of dropping the bombs made a right turn and laid a course directly toward the warships lying directly offshore from BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At this time the warships, as well as the shore batteries opened up with anti-aircraft fire, the intensity of which was illustrated by the statement of the formation leader of the first element that the second element could not be seen because of the thickness of the box barrage that the anti-aircraft batteries were throwing up.

Despite the anti-aircraft, bombs were released, and the ball-turret gunner on Captain Thomas's ship observed three hits on a transport.

The first element turned away to the left, after its run, and the second element turned away to the right, instead of staying with the first element, as previously planned. The pursuit escort of four P-38's and six P-40's stayed with the first element of five ships.

Over EAST POINT, on BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, the four ship formation was attacked by 20 -30 type 2 Zero fighters, and the formation leader, Captain HALL, started towards WEST CAPE, CHOISEUL ISLAND, losing altitude.

Near CAPE ALEXANDER, Captain HOUX was seen falling behind, and was never seen again.

The remaining three planes, which had by now dropped down to an altitude of between a thousand and fifteen hundred feet, tried to take advantage of cloud protection, but the sky at this altitude was no more than 1/20th covered with small cumulous clouds, and offered practically no protection. It proved almost a hindrance, in as much as Captain HALL was making violent turns to right and left to take advantage of each cloud, which necessitated, on the part of Captain THOMAS, putting one foot on the rudder bar to obtain enough leverage to make the turns and stay in the formation. Captain THOMAS crossed over to the left, making a three-ship echelon.

A few minutes later, on emerging from one of the larger clouds, Captain HALL's ship was not in the formation, and was nowhere in sight. This left Capt. THOMAS flying on Captain HENSLEY's wing.

All during this time, the large number of the Zero fighters were pressing their attacks, enabling them to come in from as many as four directions at once, making fire control very difficult.

Off RINGANA, on CHOISEUL ISLAND, Captain HENSLEY's plane was observed to be on fire, flames coming out of the radio compartment, perhaps the result of hits by incendiaries in the radio tank. His plane hit the water, exploded, and was burning when last observed. Two of the Zeros broke off and circled the wreckage.

This left Captain THOMAS's plane alone to keep up a running fight from RINGANA Point to the middle of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND, a distance of 210 statute miles, at which point the Zeros finally gave up the attack.

The bombardier, Lieut. HOWAT, firing one of the nose guns, was hit in the leg, but when an attack was called off as coming in at his position he dragged himself back to his gun to fire the nine rounds of ammunition he had left, accounting for the Zero, and receiving hits himself in his shoulder, elbow and hand.

The radio operator, Corporal P. J. MURPHY, manning one of the waist guns, was badly hit in the leg, but lay down on his back and kept passing up ammunition to the gunners until he was hit again in the same leg, resulting in a compound fracture of the left femur.

The tail gunner, Sgt. B.J.CULLINABE, had a stoppage on one of his guns, and then had the remaining gun stopped by a burst of fire coming from a Zero fighter which entered his side window, narrowly escaping his head, and causing minor abrasions from flying glass. He kept to his post for twenty minutes, pointing the useless guns at attacking Zeros, so as not to give away the vulnerability of his station. When Corporal MURPHY received his second hit, Sgt. CULLINABE came back and took over the second waist gun.

The ball-turret gunner, Sgt. T.L. WOLFE, had one gun jam, and immediately afterwards received a burst through the ball-turret that put the hydraulic control and the entire lower turret out of commission. He then left the ball-turret, after receiving wounds from the bursting shells in his hands, went forward, and manned the radio guns, until he ran out of ammunition.

Major W. H. McCARROLL, flight surgeon for the 44th fighter squadron, was also on the flight, and despite the heavy fire going on, made his way around the airplane, giving medical aid to Lieut. HOWAT in nose position, and putting a traction splint on Corporal MURPHY in waist position.

With the tail and ball-turret out of commission, and the nose and radio guns out of ammunition, the only defensive measures left to the pilot were turns into the attacking airplanes, and full throttle operation to try to out-run them.

About 1/3rd of the zeros were fighting with belly tanks still attached, which meant they were prepared to follow for some distance.

Handling the airplane was made more difficult by the fact that all of the trim tab control wires had been shot off, and the only way the nose could be kept down for level flight was by placing both knees or a foot on the steering column. Number one and number two engines had already been hit, and were dangerously close to complete failure.

The co-pilot, Lieut. INMAN, as hit by flying glass when shells struck the glass three inches behind the pilot's head.

After leaving the Zeros at SANTA ISABEL ISLAND, these two engines had to be favored, but Captain THOMAS didn't try to feather either one, despite the drag, for fear that a third might give out.

Over HENDERSON FIELD, GUADALCANAL, number one engine was smoking badly, and the propeller on number two engine had run away.

Landing was made on one flat tire, which was found to contain four or five Japanese shells, but the ship did not go off the runway. At the expense of burning out the other tire.

The ship and crew had sustained a continuous attack of over fifty minutes, and was the only ship of the four in the element to return.

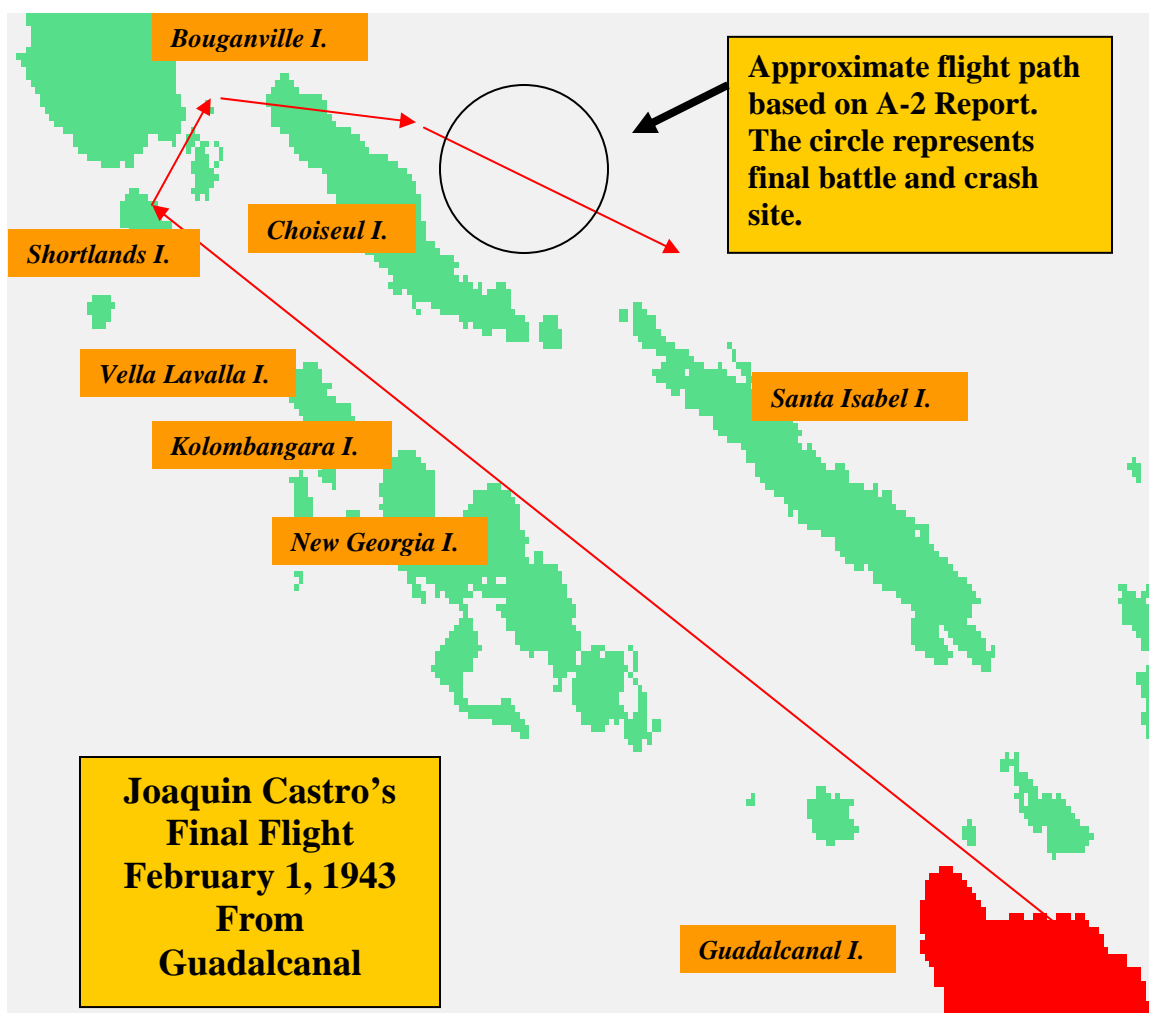
Four Zeros were observed by a coast watcher on CHOISEUL, to have been shot down while the four ships of the B-17 formation were still together.

During the time Captain THOMAS's ship was sustaining the attack alone, his crew accounted for three zeros and saw them crash into the water. Lieut. HOWAT is credited for the first, Sgt. WOLFE for the second, and Cpl. G. W. Ward, the other waist gunner, for the third.

CORCORAN THOM JR.

1st Lt. Air Corps

S-2 Officer, CACTUS (*Bib. # 70*)



Bib. #70

Photo Gallery

Below are the rest of the photos in the Joaquin Castro collection. Very few of them had captions or notations to identify the person or persons in the photo or the location they were taken from. Most of them were to be incorporated in the book he wanted to write. Subsequently, I am adding them here to allow the opportunity for the readers to share a positive identification of the person or persons in the photo as well as any pertinent history.



Unknown cadets at Basic Flying School Moffet Field California



Unknown Officer at Honolulu Zoo near Diamond Head Oahu



Unknown cadets at Luke Field Barracks "B" section 1.



Unknown Officers on left and unknown Luke Field cadet on the right.



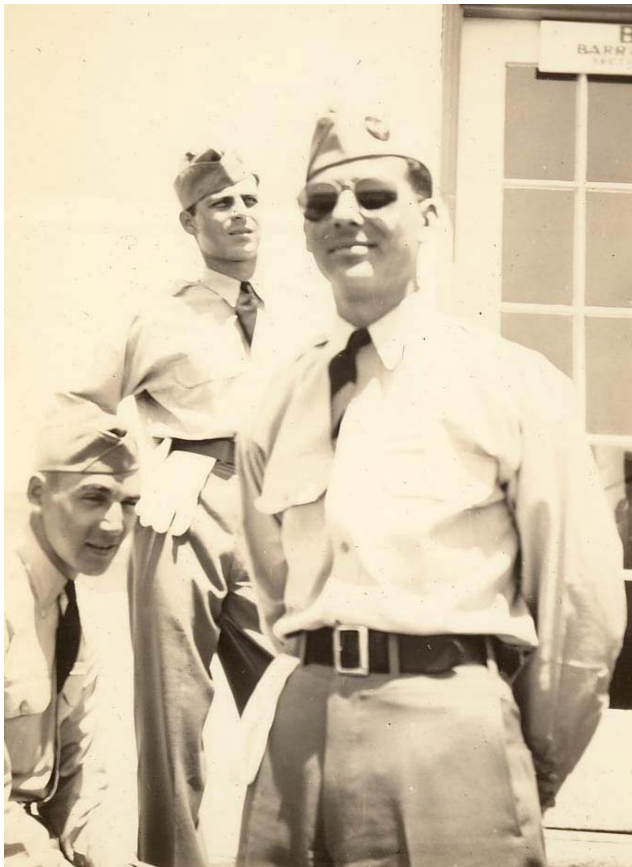
Unknown Cadet ready for take off at Moffet Field



Waiting for their turn. Unknown cadets at Moffet.



Unknown Cadets on the left at Moffet Field and Unknown Cadets on the right at Luke field.



Unknown Cadets on the left at Luke Field and Unknown Officer with foot on commode at Bellows.



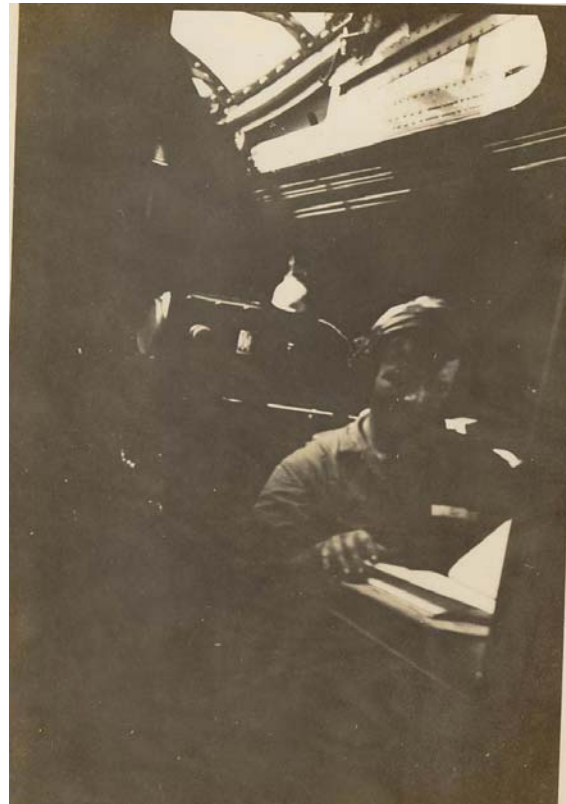
Unknown Navigator (Possibly 2nd Lt. Frank Sterns). Unknown cadet at Moffet.



Unknown Cadet marching at Luke Field and Unknown Cadet at Moffet Field.



Unknown Cadets from Moffet Field California



Unknown Cadet at Moffet Field on the left and Unknown Radio Operator on B-17 on Right (SGT Jesse Olmstead?)

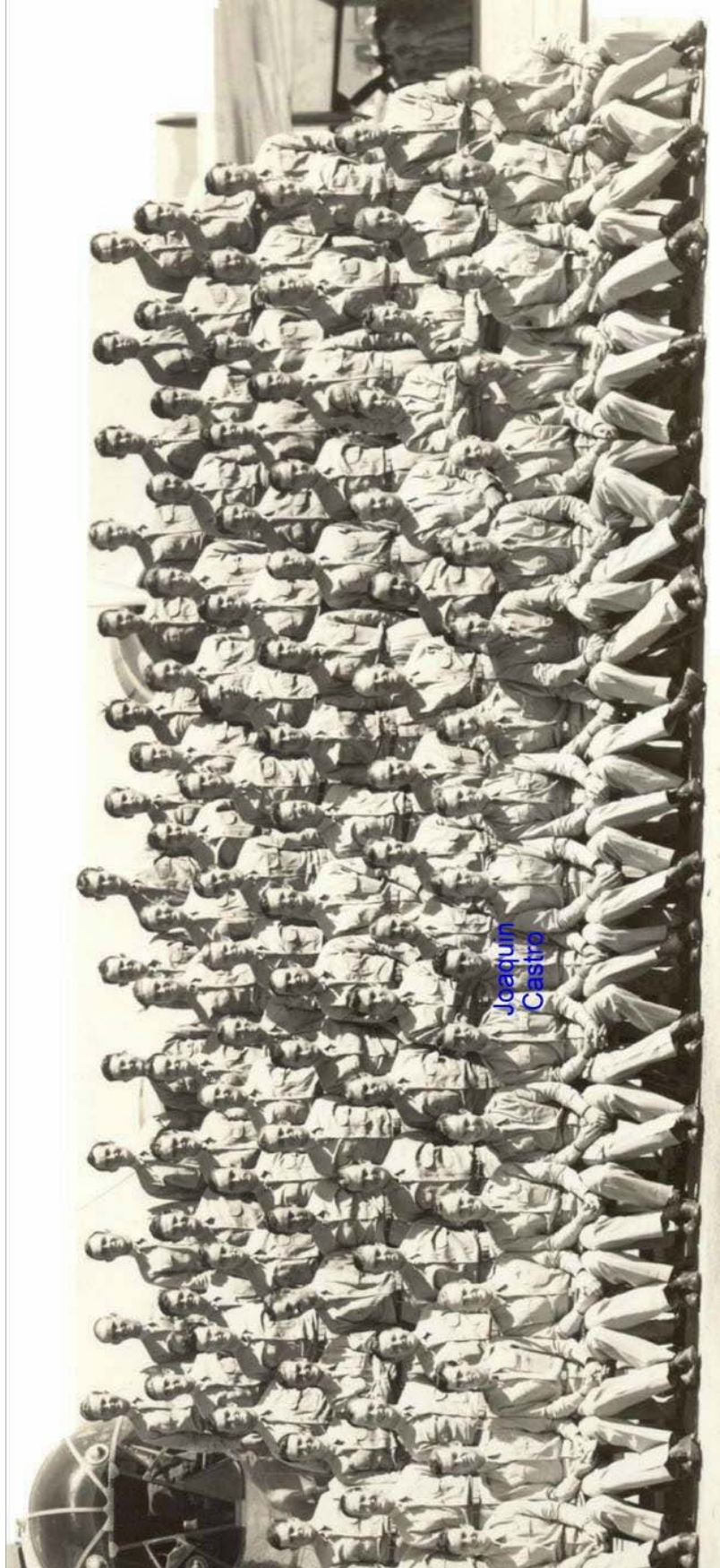


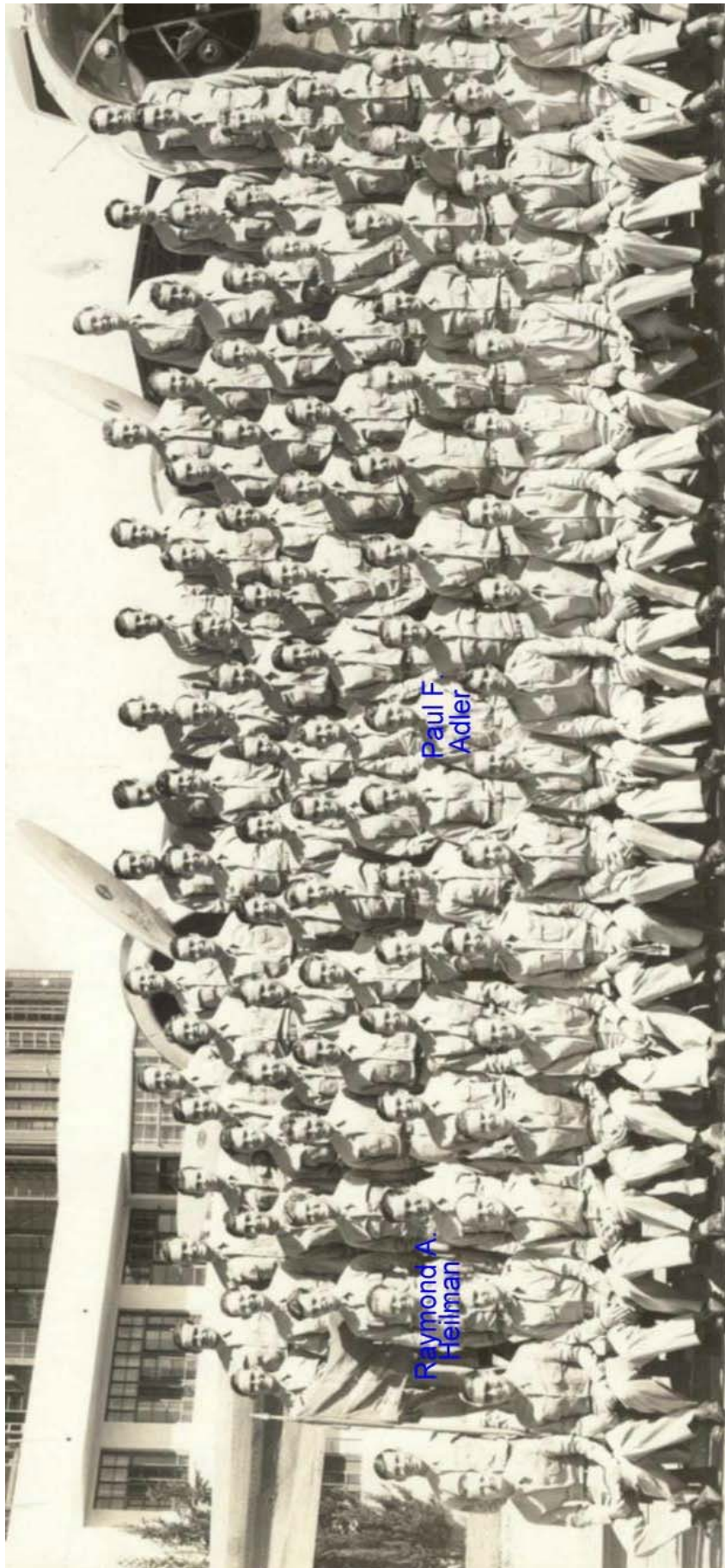
Unknown Officers at Bellows



Abel Cespedes on the left and Bob Gonzalez-Fierros on the right "getting ready for AM School" at Bellows

42nd Squadron, 11th Bomb Group Hickam AFB 1941
Photo courtesy of Gregg Heilman







Paul Adler Sr. (Joaquin' crew mate) on right with a buddy at Hickam. Photo courtesy of





Raymond (Bud) Heilman Squadron mate and good friend of Joaquin.





Jeanne Ritchie and Libby





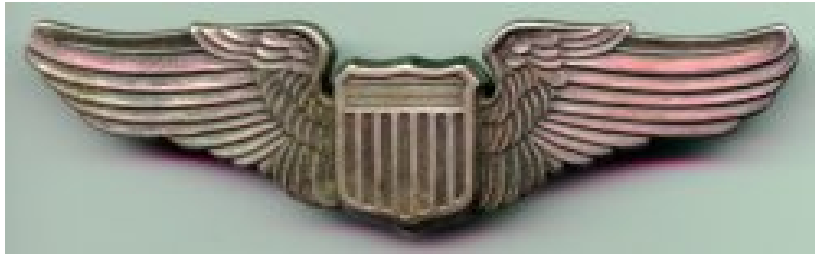
Lercila (upper Left taken 5/41), Libby's sister Maria Antonia (upper Rt). Tere L. in her new car June 8, 1941.



Calin Dellert 23rd Infantry Company "L" Fort Sam Houston Texas: "To Zorra from Calin"

The Crew of Brothers

It is uncertain if the crew that sacrificed their lives for our freedom were always together. However, it was not uncommon for B-17 crews to spend a considerable amount of time together during training and during play. A good reason for this was to allow the crew to react quickly when an alert was announced. Furthermore, it would allow the crew to work and bond together as a team. One thing I always try to inspire in my Football athletes, of today and in the past, is to remember one thing when you are on the field, "Eleven Brothers are hard to beat!" Well, these nine brother evidently were so hard to beat that it took anywhere from 20 to 30 enemy planes to bring them down. These guys were a TEAM. No, these guys were BROTHERS! Hal Hall's research (with Hal's permission) will be used here so I may recognize and honor the men that flew with Joaquin on Ship # 41-9151.



Bib. # 71



Maj. Earl O. Hall
Pilot

S/N: 0-325099

Crawford, TEXAS

Silver Star with Oak Leaf
Cluster, Distinguished Flying
Cross,
Air Medal with Oak Leaf
Cluster, Purple Heart,
Presidential Unit Citation
with Oak Leaf Cluster.

Courtesy of Hal Hall

Earl received his scholastic training at Crawford, Texas and graduated valedictorian of his class. Attended Texas A&M at Collage Station and graduated with honors in 1934. Upon graduation, he received his commission of 2nd Lt. with the U.S. Army Reserves. He enlisted as a Flying Cadet on September 11, 1940. He attended primary training at Santa Maria, California; basic training at Moffet Field; and advanced training at Stockton, California where he received his wings on April 25, 1941. Before service, he was employed with the Texas Power and Light Company in Dallas, Tyler and Waco. He was stationed at Hickam when the Japanese attacked destroying his B-18. He was promoted to Captain on April 1, 1942. He and Joaquin were crewmates from May of 1942 until February 1, 1943. He was then promoted to Major after being appointed as Commanding Officer for the 42nd Squadron on January 1943.



Bib. 71



**1st Lt. Joaquin Castro
Co-Pilot**

S/N: 0-428914

Mission, TEXAS

Silver Star,
Distinguished Flying
Cross, Air Medal with
Oak Leaf Cluster,
Purple Heart,
Presidential Unit
Citation with Oak Leaf
Cluster



Bib. 72



**2nd Lt. Frank N. Sterns
Jr.
Navigator**

S/N: 0- 438256

Chicago, Illinois

Air Medal
Purple Heart

The navigator's duties are to direct the flight path from departure to destination or from departure, to destination and then back to base. He must know the exact position of the airplane at all times with the aid of Pilotage, Dead reckoning, radio navigation, or from celestial navigation. In order to fulfill his duties as navigator, he must also be familiar with instrument calibration, pre-flight planning, and flight debriefing. The navigator operates and services one of the machine guns located near his station.



Bib. # 73



S/Sgt. James W. Bales
Bombardier

S/N: 15058894

Crawfordsville, Indiana

Distinguished Flying
Cross, Air Medal with Oak
Leaf Custer, Purple Heart

The bombardier is responsible for accurate and effective bombing. He is in absolute command of the plane during the bombing run. He actually may control the plane through the bomb sight while making his way to the correct release point. As preparatory tasks, the bombardier studies the current target and corresponding weather conditions before take-off, and arms the bombs when the plane is over enemy territory. The bombardier also operates the machine guns located on the nose of the B-17.



Bib. 74



**T/Sgt. Paul Adler
Engineer**

S/N: 06147915

Cambridge 40,
Massachusetts

Distinguished Flying
Cross, Air Medal, Purple
Heart

Courtesy of Paul Adler

The engineer's primary duties are to know more about the airplane than any other member of the crew. He works in tandem with the pilot and co-pilot. He checks engine operation, fuel consumption, and the operation of all equipment on board the B-17. In addition, he works with the bombardier and radio operator by helping them in their tasks. The engineer operates the top turret guns of the plane.



Bib # 75



Bib. #8

**S/Sgt. Francis S.
Banasiak
Asst. Engineer
Waist Gunner**

S/N: 11020224

Holyoke, Massachusetts

Distinguished Flying
Cross, Air Medal with
Oak Leaf Cluster,
Purple Heart

Waist gunners were characterized as “Flexible Gunners” as opposed to “Turret Gunners. They were responsible for knowing the coverage area of all gun positions on the plane. They were experts in identifying enemy and friendly types of aircraft. They were also responsible in the maintenance and operations of all guns in various conditions.



Bib. 76



**S/Sgt. James C. Stephens Jr.
Radio Operator**

S/N: 06953552

Paonia, Colorado

Distinguished Flying Cross,
Air Medal with Oak Leaf
Cluster, Purple Heart with Oak
Leaf Cluster.

Courtesy of Paul Stephens

The radio operator is responsible for all the radio equipment on the B-17. His duties include providing position reports, assisting the navigator, and keeping the liaison and command settings properly tuned and are in good working order. Furthermore, he is required to maintain a log of important transmissions. In addition to his radio operation duties, he multitasks as a gunner and flight photographer.



Bib. # 75



Sgt. Jesse N. Olmstead
Asst. Radio
Operator/Gunner

S/N: 11033041

Norwalk, Connecticut

Distinguished Flying
Cross, Air Medal with
Oak Leaf Cluster, Purple
Heart

?

The Gunners belong to a one of two distinct categories: Turret Gunners and Flexible Gunners. They have to be familiar with the coverage area of all gun positions. They also have to be experts in aircraft identification. In addition, they must also know how to maintain and operate the guns in various conditions. The designated Gunner posts are right and left Waist Gunners, Ball Turret Gunner, Top Turret Gunner, Tail Gunner, Nose Gunner and Cheek Gunner.



Bib. # 75



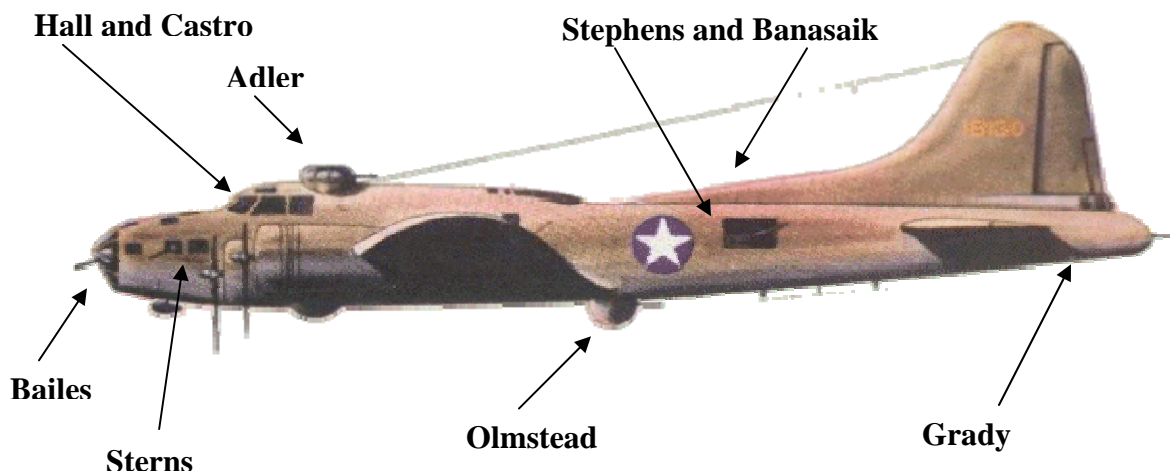
Bib. # 66

Sgt. Martin T Grady
Aerial Gunner

S/N: 06980875

New York City, New York

Silver Star, Distinguished
Flying Cross, Air Medal
with Oak Leaf Cluster,
Purple Heart



Probable Gun Positions of crew. (Bib. #77)

Transcribed Flight Log from Journal

Flight Times

May of 1942

DATE	Type of Plane	Mission	Time	Time this Month	Total Time	Remarks
On Captain Hall's Crew			May			
5/10/1942	B-17D	Search1	15:00	15:00	15:00	Search Mission out of Hawaii-back again.
5/12/1942	B-17D	P.Bombing	3:45	18:35	18:35	Practice Bombing Hawaii.
5/12/1942	B-17D	Local	1:15	20:00	20:00	Practice Night landings.
5/14/1942	B-17E	Formation	4:00	24:00	24:00	Formation and Bombing Kawai #1.
5/17/1942	B-17D	Bombing	4:00	28:00	28:00	Bombing at Kawai.
5/17/1942	B-17D	Training	3:30	31:30	31:30	With Eberenz to Hilo and back.
5/18/1942	"	Interception2	4:00	35:30	35:30	Squadron Interception Problem.
5/19/1942	"	Local	2:00	37:30	37:30	Practice Night landings-Oahu.
5/20/1942	"	Local	2:00	39:30	39:30	Radio Range Orientation problem.
5/24/1942	"	Search3	11:00	50:30	50:30	Search, contacted DD and SS. (F).
5/28/1942	"	Search4	12:00	62:30	62:30	Search out of Hickam- no contacts.
5/29/1942	"	Local	2:05	64:35	64:35	Dawn Patrol around Oahu.
5/30/1942	"	Local	2:00	66:35	66:35	Compass Swing.
5/31/1942	"	Local	2:00	68:35	68:35	Dawn Patrol to Kauai and back.
			June			
6/2/1942	B-17E	Local	2:00	2:00	70:35	Dawn Patrol around Oahu.
6/2/1942	"	Local	0:40	2:40	71:15	Moved-out of Hickam to Kualoa; change of station.
6/6/1942	"	Search5	11:15	13:55	82:30	Search Mission- Out of Hawaii.
6/7/1942	"	Local	0:20	14:15	82:50	Hickam to Kuoloa.
6/9/1942	"	Local	1:45	16:00	84:35	Compass Swing.
6/13/1942	"	Formation6	8:00	24:00	92:35	Oahu to Midway.
6/14/1942	"	Search6	7:47	31:47	100:22	Search for Enemy out of Midway.
6/15/1942	"	Local	1:15	33:02	101:37	Compass Swing.
6/16/1942	"	Search7	8:45	41:47	110:22	Search- Midway.
6/18/1942	"	Search8	8:30	50:17	118:50	" " "
6/19/1942	"	Local	1:30	51:47	120:20	Compass Swing.
6/20/1942	"	Search9	8:30	60:17	128:50	Search- Midway for Enemy.
6/22/1942	"	Search10	8:30	68:47	137:20	" " " "
6/24/1942	"	Search11	9:00	77:47	146:20	" " " "
6/25/1942	"	Search12	8:00	85:47	154:20	Search for Survivals at sea out of Midway.
6/26/1942	"	Formation13	10:00	95:47	164:20	Formation Flight from Midway to Hawaii.
6/30/1942	"	P. Bombing	1:30	97:17	165:50	Practice Bombing Mission.

July						
DATE	PLANE	MISSION	TIME	TIME-Month	TOTAL TIME	REMARKS
7/1/1942	B-17E	Bombing	3:00	3:00	168:50	Practice Bombing.
7/3/1942	"	Gunnery	1:20	4:20	170:10	Gunnery practice- formation.
7/5/1942	"	Search14	4:30	8:50	174:40	Search mission out of Kualoa.
7/12/1942	"	Local	1:30	10:20	176:10	Compass Swing.
7/14/1942	"	Local	0:45	11:05	176:55	Hickam to Kahutu.
7/11/1942	"	Local	0:40	11:45	177:35	Kualoa to Kahuku.
7/15/1942	"	Local	0:30	12:15	178:05	Kualoa to Hickam.
7/15/1942	"	Local	0:30	12:45	178:35	Hickam to Kahutu.
7/16/1942	"	Local	0:30	13:15	179:05	Kahuku to Hickam.
4/16/1942	"	Local	0:30	13:45	179:35	Hickam to Kahutu.
7/17/1942	"	Local	1:00	14:45	200:35	Kahuku to Hickam and back.
7/18/1942	"	X-C	9:00	23:45	209:35	Kahuku, Hawaii to Christmas Island.
7/19/1942	"	X-C	6:30	30:15	216:05	Christmas Island to Canton.
7/20/1942	"	X-C	7:35	37:50	223:40	Canton to Noudi, Fiji Islands.
7/22/1942	"	X-C	6:30	44:20	230:10	Fiji Islands to New Caledonia.
7/24/1942	"	Local	2:00	46:20	232:10	Dawn Patrol at New Caledonia.
7/26/1942	"	Local	2:30	48:50	234:40	Dawn Patrol at New Caledonia.
7/28/1942	"	Search1	8:40	51:30	243:20	Search out of N.C.- no contacts.
7/31/1942	"	X-C	2:35	60:05	245:55	Dawn Patrol at New Caledonia to Efate.

Total Flying time including school, training, B-18 &

B-17 time up to July 1, 1942 = 535:20

Flying time for July= 60:05

To be carried forward now 595:25

August

8/1/1942	B-17E	Fotogroup2	9:55	9:55	605:20	Foto Mission over Malaita-Solomon Is.
8/2/1942	"	X-C	2:50	12:45	608:10	Efate to New Caledonia.
8/3/1942	"	Observation3	6:20	19:05	614:30	Observation of our Fleet.
8/4/1942	"	Search4	10:20	29:25	624:50	Search out of New Caledonia.
8/6/1942	"	Search5	10:55	40:20	635:45	Search -N.C. Lost again- 3 times now, engine trouble.
8/10/1942	"	Search6	9:00	49:20	644:45	Searched out of New Caledonia.
8/11/1942	"	formation	2:10	51:30	646:55	From New. Cal. To Efate.
8/12/1942	"	X-C	1:32	53:02	648:27	Efate to Espiritu Santo.
8/12/1942	"	X-C	1:20	54:22	649:47	Santo to Efate.
8/13/1942	"	Cargo	1:06	55:28	650:53	Cargo from Efate to Santo.
8/13/1942	"	X-C	1:20	56:48	652:13	Santo to Efate.
8/14/1942	"	Cargo	1:16	58:04	653:29	Efate to Santo.
8/15/1942	"	Search7	9:30	67:34	662:59	Search Mission out of Santo into Solomons.
8/17/1942	"	Patrol	3:00	70:34	665:59	Santo - Off Shore Patrol.
8/18/1942	"	Bombing8	8:30	79:04	674:29	Bombing of Gizo, New Georgia Is.
8/19/1942	"	X-C	3:45	82:49	678:14	Santo to New Cal.
8/21/1942	"	Escort	2:35	85:24	680:49	Escorted P-400's from N.C. to Efate.
8/21/1942	"	Escort	1:30	86:54	682:19	" " " Efate to Santos.
8/22/1942	"	Escort9	9:00	95:54	691:19	" " " Santos to Guadalcanal.
8/25/1942	"	Bombing10	13:30	109:24	704:49	Bombed ships at Gizo harbor with Norton.
8/26/1942	"	Search11	12:40	122:04	717:29	Search-Contacted Enemy 4-engine flying boat- shot down some- attacked by zeros.
8/28/1942	"	Search12	11:00	133:04	728:29	Search out of Santo.
8/31/1942	"	X-C	3:00	136:04	731:39	Santo to New Caledonia.

September

DATE	PLANE	MISSION	TIME	Time-month	Total Time	Remarks
9/10/1942	B17-E	Test Hop	2:13	2:13	733:42	Test Hoped #420- Johnny come for a ride.
9/11/1942	"	C-X	2:20	4:33	736:02	New Caledonia to Efate.
9/11/1942	"	C-X	1:00	5:33	737:02	Efate to Santos.
9/12/1942	"	Search13	12:30	18:03	749:32	Search- Santos- Very bad weather, no contacts.
9/13/1942	"	Bombing14	7:00	25:03	756:32	Looking for Jap Task Force- no contacts.
9/15/1942	"	Search15	12:00	37:03	768:32	Search- Santos.
9/19/1942	"	Bombing16	11:15	48:18	779:47	Bombed Rakata Bay - no hits observed.
9/21/1942	"	Bombing17	10:15	58:33	790:02	Bombed Rakata Bay - fires set.
9/24/1942	"	C-X	3:25	61:58	793:27	Santos to New Caledonia..
October						
10/6/1942		C-X	4:25	4:25	797:52	New Caledonia to Santos.
10/8/1942		Search18	11:00	15:25	808:52	Search-Santos-Contacted Jap Task Force, attacked by 2 Zero fighter shot down one, landed at Guadalcanal. Stayed there overnight.
		X-C-				
10/9/1942		Search19	4:30	19:55	813:22	Guadalcanal to Santos.
10/12/1942		Search20	12:15	32:10	825:37	Search-Santos-sighted life raft- Rescued.
10/14/1942		Bombing21	8:00	40:10	833:37	Stiking against Jap Task force- darkness.
10/18/1942		Search22	12:00	52:10	845:37	Search- Santos.
10/24/1942		Local	1:45	53:55	847:22	Test Hop #213 over Santos.
10/25/1942		Search23	13:00	66:55	860:22	Search- Santos contacted 1BB, 3DD Japs, attacked by Zeros, good clouds.
November						
11/1/1942		Cargo	3:10	3:10	863:32	Santos to New Caledonia.
11/2/1942	"	Cargo	3:00	6:10	866:32	N.C. to Santos with footlockers and Officer's mess equipmt
Gone to New Zealand for a rest						
11/25/1942	"	Search24	12:00	18:10	868:32	Search out of Santos.
11/28/1942	"	Search25	12:15	30:25	898:47	" " " " .(887:25) according to operations.

December

DATE	PLANE	MISSION	TIME	Time-Month	Total Time	Remarks
12/3/1942	B17E	Search26	12:15	12:15	911:02	Search out of Santos.
12/9/1942	"	Bombing27	8:00	20:15	919:02	Bombed Munda Air Field (100#).
12/10/1942	"	Bombing28	5:50	26:05	924:52	Bombed Shortland- Tanker (1000#).
12/11/1942	"	Bombing29	5:15	31:20	930:07	Bombed Munda Air Field (100#).
12/14/1942	"	Bombing30	12:35	43:55	942:42	Bombed Munda Air Field (100#).
12/16/1942	"	Bombing31	7:40	51:15	950:22	Bombed Munda Air Field (100#) Hyland shot down.
12/16/1942	"	Bombing32	3:00	54:15	953:22	Bombed Munda Air Field (100#).
12/17/1942	"	Bombing33	3:35	57:50	958:57	Bombed Munda Air Field (100#).
12/18/1942	"	Bombing34	3:50	61:40	962:47	Bombed Munda Air Field (100#).
12/19/1942	"	C-X	5:00	66:40	967:47	Return to Santos.
12/23/1942	"	Search35	11:20	79:00	980:07	Searched Santos-sighted empty life boat and debris.
12/26/1942	"	Search36	11:15	90:15	991:22	Searched Santos- no contacts.
12/28/1942	"	C-X	4:40	94:55	996:02	Santos to Guadalcanal.
12/29/1942	"	C-X	5:45	100:40	1001:47	Guadalcanal to Port Moresby- Night Mission.

January

1/1/1943	B17E	Bombing	4:30	4:30	1006:17	Bombing out of Port Moresby, Bad weather.
1/4/1943	"	Bombing	6:45	11:15	1013:02	Bombing Rabaul out of P.M. Bad weather.
1/5/1943	"	C-X	5:30	16:45	1018:32	Return to Guadalcanal.
1/6/1943	"	Bombing37	4:50	21:15	1023:22	Bombed Shortland Harbor.
1/12/1943	"	Search	11:00	32:35	1034:22	Searched out of Santos- no contacts.
1/14/1943	"	Compass Swing	1:45	34:20	1036:07	Swing Compass on #213- Stern.
1/16/1943	"	Search	10:40	45:00	1046:47	Search- Santos- Pelton.
1/24/1943	"	Search	11:30	56:30	1058:17	Search- Santos- Carper.
1/27/1943	"	Search	9:15	65:45	1067:32	Search for lost crew- G.T.

Newspaper Article

MISSION HERO May Never Get to Write That Book

Special to The Star-Telegram

MISSION, May 4.—Missing in action since Feb. 1, First Lt. Joaquin Castro, Army Air Forces Flying Fortress pilot in the South Pacific, may never get to write the book, "Living On and Under the Wing," which he planned for his first after-the-war task.

He was stationed at Hickam Field when the war started. Once he was adrift in a rubber raft for four days without food and water. He was awarded the Air Medal with the Oak Leaf Cluster.

His father, Crispin Castro, Latin American carpenter, will receive the decorations.

The Oak Leaf Cluster was awarded to Lieutenant Castro for combat action which took place over the Solomon Islands on Aug. 16, and for another action in the same area on Dec. 16. It was revealed to the young officer's parents in a letter from Maj. Gen. J. A. Ulio, adjutant general of the Army.

"As first pilot of a heavy bombardment plane, sent on a search mission Aug. 16, 1942, Lieutenant Castro participated in an attack on a Japanese four-engine flying boat which was sighted and engaged in battle at a point about 50 miles northwest of Gizo Island," an official report said.

"After the first firing, the enemy craft turned away but was overtaken and again engaged for approximately 45 minutes, finally being shot down by Lieutenant Castro and other members of his crew. Immediately after this action, their airplane was attacked by an enemy fighter which made one pass, secured two hits on the left wing, and then pursued, out of gun range, for approximately 50 miles before turning away."

Letters which Lieutenant Castro wrote at frequent intervals to his former employer, J. F. Ewers of Mission, revealed many interesting sidelights of his combat experiences and of the philosophy of life which he had developed.

In November, 1942, he wrote that he was getting all the fun he had expected and that he had a sneaking suspicion that he had only started.

One letter described his experiences and his thoughts during the four days when he and eight other members of a bomber crew were adrift in rubber life rafts "somewhere off Oahu" after their instruments had miscalculated and their plane was forced down, out of fuel.

"For a while there, I was figuring out that it was going to be very interesting finding out all those questions that bother most men as to what lies just beyond in that other world when you step out of this one," he said. "I was sort of looking forward to it . . . one thing that was bothering me most was the question of food. Would I have to worry about food over there?"

Lieutenant Castro, 25, was commissioned in November, 1941, at Luke Field, Ariz.

Before he received the appointment for aviation training he was employed in the law firm of Strickland, Ewers & Wilkins of Mission, working in the office where he



LIEUTENANT CASTRO.

pay his tuition. He was active in football, baseball, basket ball and track in high school and college.

Signs Urge Lifts for Service Men

MONAHANS, May 3.—Signs reading "Give a Soldier a Lift" have been placed at two service men "pick-up" stations on Highway 30 here, according to Russell Ackley, Monahans Lions Club publicity chairman.

The club, sponsored by the erection of the stations at the suggestion of the public relations office at the Rattlesnake Bomber Base, Pote, and joins the Army in requesting co-operation from soldier and civilian alike in the effort to discourage the dangerous practice of stringing out along the highway to seek rides.

2,000 Reservists Will Be 'Screened' at Maxey

DALLAS, May 4 (AP).—Two thousand enlisted reservists from colleges in five States in the 8th Service Command will be "screened" at Camp Maxey, Texas, beginning Saturday to determine which Army specialized training unit they shall be sent to, Command Headquarters announced Tuesday.

Selection of the reservists for further training will provide an uninterrupted flow of professionally and technically trained men to fill the growing needs of the Army, the announcement said.

TEST PETROLEUM JELLY THIS WAY

Press Mocoline between thumb and finger. Spread slowly apart. Long, fibrous strands prove Mocoline's high quality. For minor cuts, burns, bruises, 5c; triple-size, 10c.

KIDNEYS MUST REMOVE EXCESS ACIDS

Help 15 Miles of Kidney Tubes Flush Out Poisonous Waste

If you have an excess of acids in your blood, your 15 miles of kidney tubes may be overworked. These tiny filters and tubes are working day and night to help Nature rid your system of excess acids and poisonous waste.

When disorder of kidney function permits poisonous matter to remain in your blood, it may cause aching backache, rheumatic pains, leg pains, loss of pep and energy, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes, headaches and dizziness. Frequent or acute

These are the newspaper clipping from The Star Telegram. Below you can read the entire article from the first source and the second is just a fragment that was found in the box of Joaquin's memorabilia.

Mission Hero May Never Get to Write That Book

Special to The Star-Telegram

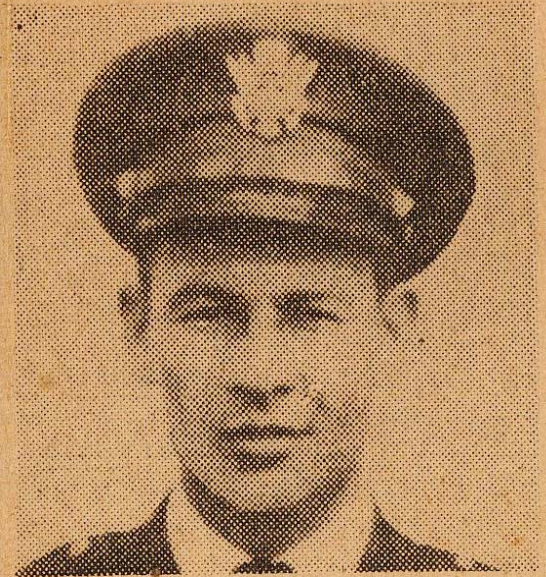
MISSION, May 4.—Missing in action since Feb. 1, First Lt. Joaquin Castro, Army Air Forces Flying Fortress pilot in the South Pacific, may never get to write the book, "Living On and Under the Wing," which he planned for his first after-the-war task.

He was stationed at Hickam Field when the war started. Once he was adrift in a rubber raft for four days without food and water. He was awarded the Air Medal with the Oak Leaf Cluster.

His father, Crispin Castro, Latin American carpenter, will receive the decorations.

The Oak Leaf Cluster was awarded to Lieutenant Castro for combat action which took place over the Solomon Islands on Aug. 16, and for another action in the same area on Dec. 16, it was revealed to the young officer's parents in a letter from Maj. Gen. J. A. Ulio, adjutant general of the Army.

"As first pilot of a heavy bombardment plane, sent on a search mission Aug. 16, 1942, Lieutenant Castro participated in an attack on a Japanese four-engine flying boat which was sighted and engaged in battle at a point about 50 miles northwest of Gizo Island." an official report said.



LIEUTENANT CASTRO.

"After the first firing, the enemy craft turned away but was overtaken and again engaged for approximately 45 minutes, finally being shot down by Lieutenant Castro and other members of his crew. Immediately after this action, their airplane was attacked by an enemy fighter which made one pass, secured two hits on the left wing, and then pursued, out of gun range, for approximately 50 miles before turning away."

Letters which Lieutenant Castro wrote at frequent intervals to his former employer, J. F. Ewers of Mission, revealed many interesting sidelights of his combat experiences and of the philosophy of life which he had developed.

In November, 1942, he wrote that he was getting all the fun he had expected and that he had a sneaking suspicion that he had only started.

One letter described his experiences and his thoughts during the four days when he and eight other members of a bomber crew were adrift in rubber life rafts "somewhere off Oahu" after their instruments had miscalculated and their plane was forced down, out of fuel.

"For a while there, I was figuring out that it was going to be very interesting finding out all those questions that bother most men as to what lies just beyond in that other world when you step out of this one," he said. "I was sort of looking forward to it . . . one thing that was bothering me most was the question of food. Would I have to worry about food over there?"

Lieutenant Castro, 25, was commissioned in November, 1941, at Luke Field, Ariz.

Before he received the appointment for aviation training he was employed in the law firm of Strickland, Ewers & Wilkins of Mission, working in the office where he first served as janitor while working his way through Mission High School and Edinburg Junior College. He drove the bus operated for junior college students between Mission and Edinburg to pay his tuition. He was active in football, baseball, basket ball and track in high school and college.

Missing In Action

MISSION — Parents of First Lieut. Joaquin Castro, U. S. Army Air Forces, have received word from the War Department that he has been missing in action since February 1. Lieutenant Castro, son of Mr. and Mrs. Crispin Castro of Mission, has been stationed in the Pacific war theatre since the war began. He was stationed at Hickam Field at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack.

One of the first Mission men to be commissioned a flying officer when the defense program began. Lieutenant Castro was commissioned at Luke Field in the fall of

A School Honors his Name

Now that the story has been told it is an honor to mention that Joaquin's home town of Mission, Texas has honored the memory of this American Hero in naming an Elementary School after him. The school is located in the same neighborhood where Joaquin grew up. On December 2, 1952 the Board of Education took action and renamed East Side School on 508 North Mayberry to Joaquin Castro Elementary to honor the former student. However, the School was closed down and destroyed during the summer of 1968. Superintendent Dr. Kenneth White advocated the name be transferred to another local Elementary by the name of Citriana; a name used to recognize the local citrus industry. The vote of the school board was unanimous. Thus, when the school year started in the fall of 1968, Citriana Elementary located on 401 Citriana Dr. would now be referred to as Joaquin Castro Elementary. The school has gone through renovations and is presently a handsome looking school. Within the school are some pictures and memorabilia of Joaquin that are placed behind glass displays and hung proudly on the walls of the lobby and outside the Principal's office for the students and public to view. My plan is to donate my research to this school and the local museum so that the story of Joaquin continues to be told and never forgotten. The following pictures were sent to me by Craig Verley, Mission CISD's public relations administrator, so I may add to this book.





Joaquin on his way to a Hawaiian Luau.





Joaquin next to Consolidated Voltec BT-13 at Luke Field Phoenix Arizona Summer 1941.



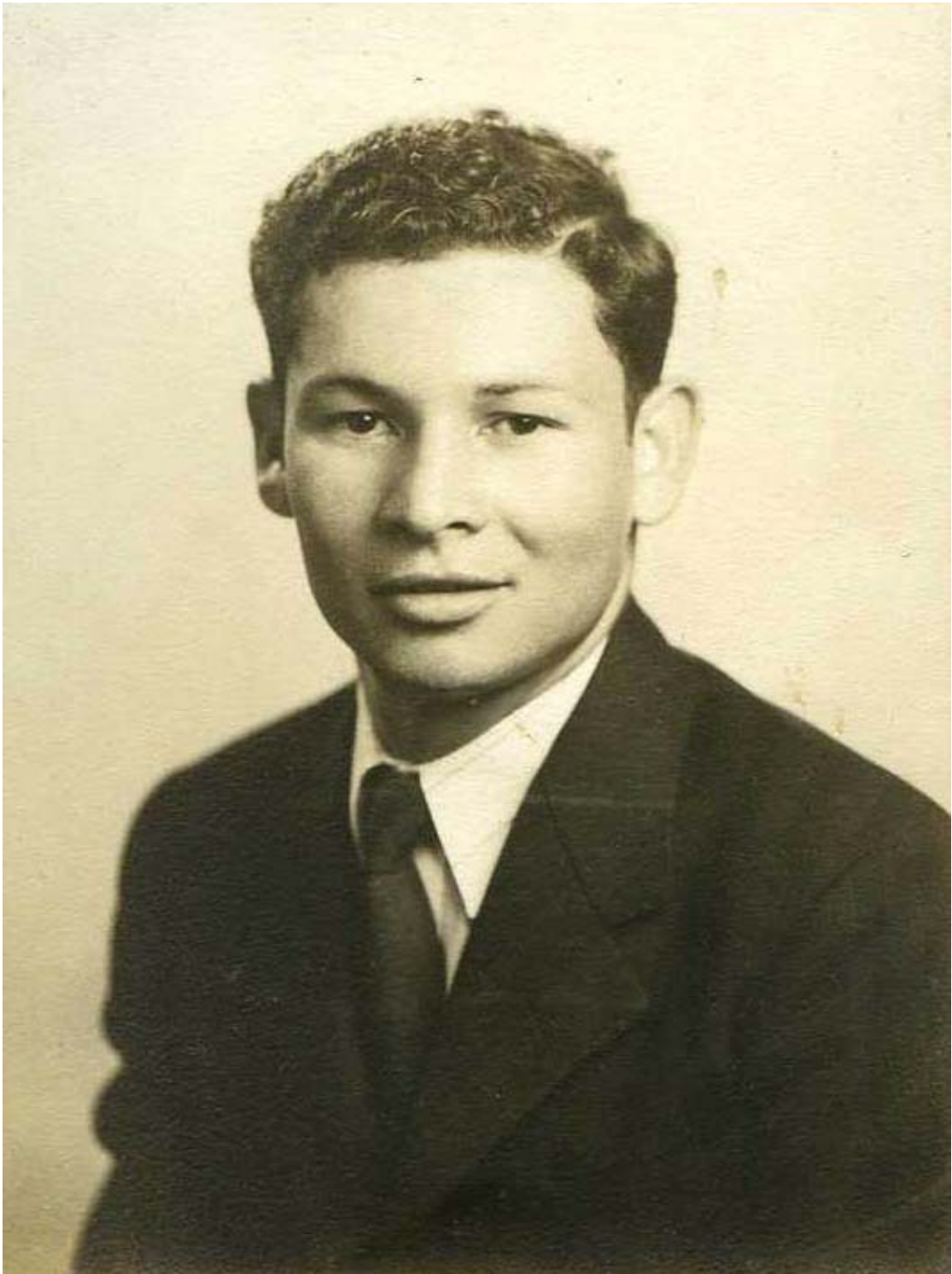
Joaquin next to Joanne and Wynona Cuthen Spring 1939



Joaquin next to his Mom November 1941 before shipping out to Hawaii.



For Majine (a dear friend) from Joaquin



Graduation Photo from Edinburg Jr. College 1939.

Bibliography

1. B-13 Valiant: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:BT-13_Valiant.jpg
2. AT-6 Texan: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:T-6_Texan.jpg
3. Pilot Wings
<http://www.ww2wings.com/wings/usaaf/pilot/amcraftaafpilot.shtml>
4. Martin B-12: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:060511-F-1234S-023.jpg>
5. O-47 North American: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:NA_O-47.jpg
6. P-40 Curtis War hawk:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/32/Curtiss_US_AF.JPG
7. 11th Bomb Group Emblem:
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:11th_Wing.png
8. 7th Air Force:
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force
9. B-18 Bolo:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c7/00910460_139.jpg
10. B-17E:
http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/photos/media_search.asp?q=B-17&page=4
11. B-17E:
http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/photos/media_search.asp?q=B-17&page=14
12. B-17G cockpit:
http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/photos/media_search.asp?q=b-17&page=6
13. Val (Japanese plane) – www.de220.com Archive # 80G32908
14. Kate (Japanese plane) – “ “ “ “ “ “ “80G178985
15. USS Arizona exploding - “ “ “ “ “ “ “80GK13512
16. “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “80GK13513
17. USS West Virginia and Tennessee - “ “ “ “ “111C5904
18. USS Shaw explodes- “ “ “ “ “ “ “80G16871
19. B-17 in half- www.history1900's.about.com
20. Damaged P-40 Bellows – www.de220.com Archive #80G127000
21. Half a P-40 Wheeler- www.history.navy.mil/
22. B-17E at Hickam – www.de220.com Archive # SC176626
23. Pile of planes Wheeler – “ “ “ “ “ “ “ SC134872
24. Pull out of fire - “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “80G32837

25. Firing Vollies - “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “ 80G32854
26. _Castro Elementary bio –
www.missioncisd.net/school/schoolhistory
27. Salecker, Gene Eric; Fortress Against the Sun , Combined Publishing, Pennsylvania, 2001 p. 60
28. PBY:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:PBY_Catalina_landing.jpg
29. Cleveland, W.M.;Grey Geese Calling ; Watchmaker Publishing per approval of the 11th Bombardment Group (H) Association, 4116 N. 66th Place, Scottsdale, AZ., 1981 p.150
30. Doolittle Crew:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Doolittle_Raider,_Plane_1.jpg
31. Doolittle pinning Medal on Bomb:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Doolittle_LtCol_i02457.jpg
32. B-25B on Deck: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:060415-F-0000G-022.jpg>
33. B-25 Taking off from Carrier:
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Army_B-25_\(Doolittle_Raid\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Army_B-25_(Doolittle_Raid).jpg)
34. B-25J: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:B25mitchellkrj.JPG>
35. Battleship Nagato - <http://www.jue.jp/files/front%20view.jpg>
36. Haguro Heavy Cruiser -
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/69/Japanese_cruiser_Haguro.jpg
37. Sendai Light Cruiser -
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e9/Sendai_class_light_cruiser.jpg
38. Aircraft Carrier Hiryu
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/19/Japanese_aircraft_carrier_Hiryu_1939.jpg/800px-Japanese_aircraft_carrier_Hiryu_1939.jpg
39. USS Lexington Abandoning Ship:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coral_Sea_Lexington_abandoning_ship.jpg
40. Coral Sea Battle -
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Coral_Sea
41. Cleveland, W.M.;Grey Geese Calling ; Watchmaker Publishing per approval of the 11th Bombardment Group (H) Association, 4116 N. 66th Place, Scottsdale, AZ., 1981 p.123
42. Compass Swing - http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/compass_swing
43. Battle of Midway -
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Midway
44. Attack on Carrier Hiryu by B-17:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hiryu_f075712.jpg

45. Midway Island Map:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Midway_Islands.svg
46. F4U Corsair: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:FG-1D_Corsair.jpg
47. B-26 Marauder:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:01097628_007.jpg
48. Kawanishi H6K “Mavis”:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Kawanishi_H6K.jpg
49. Kawanishi H8K “Emily” :
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kawanishi_H8K2_\(Emily\)_flying_boat.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kawanishi_H8K2_(Emily)_flying_boat.jpg)
50. Japanese Destroyer Amagiri -
<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/images/h50000/h50198.jpg>
51. Japanese Submarine -
upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c8/J...
52. Mitsubishi A6M:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:A6M3_Model22_UI105_Nishizawa.jpg
53. P-400: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bell_P-39Q_Airacobra_USAF.jpg
54. Aichi E13A “Jake”: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:E13A-3s.jpg>
55. Mitsubishi F1M2 “Pete”:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:F1m_00637_2g.jpg
56. Mitsubishi A6M3 “Rufe”:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/69/A6N2-N_Rufe.jpg
57. Nakajima E8N2 “Dave”;
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nakajima_E8N_seaplane.jpg
58. Kawasaki E7K “Alf”:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kawanishi_E7K_seaplane.jpg
59. Mitsubishi G4M1 “Betty”:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fd/Mitsubishi_G4M_Betty.jpg
60. Heinkel He-113: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinkel_He_113
61. Junker Ju-87: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junkers_Ju_87
62. P-38 Lightning: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:020930-O-9999G-017.jpg>
63. F4F Wildcat:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/55/F4F-3_new_pitot_tube_of_later_model.jpg

64. P-40 War Hawk in Jungle: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:P-40-flightline-201024.jpg>
65. P-39: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:061019-F-1234P-022.jpg>
66. 13th Air Force emblem:
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/13th Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/13th_Air_Force)
67. Salecker, Gene Eric; Fortress Against the Sun, Combined Publishing, Pennsylvania, 2001 p. 321
68. Cleveland, W.M.;Grey Geese Calling ; Watchmaker Publishing per approval of the 11th Bombardment Group (H) Association, 4116 N. 66th Place, Scottsdale, AZ., 1981 p. 127
69. Cleveland, W.M.;Grey Geese Calling ; Watchmaker Publishing per approval of the 11th Bombardment Group (H) Association, 4116 N. 66th Place, Scottsdale, AZ., 1981 p. 397+398.
70. Solomon Island Chain:
[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3e/Solomon Islands - Guadalcanal.PNG](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3e/Solomon_Islands_-_Guadalcanal.PNG)
71. With permission from Bob Schwartz – Pilot Wings:
<http://www.ww2wings.com/wings/usaaf/usaafpilot.shtml>
72. With permission from Bob Schwartz – Navigator Wings:
<http://www.ww2wings.com/wings/usaaf/usaafnavigator.shtml>
73. With permission from Bob Schwartz – Bombardier Wings:
<http://www.ww2wings.com/wings/usaaf/usaafbombardier.shtml>
74. With permission from Bob Schwartz – Engineer Wings:
<http://www.ww2wings.com/wings/usaaf/usaafflightengineer.shtml>
75. With permission from Bob Schwartz – Gunner Wings:
<http://www.ww2wings.com/wings/usaaf/usaafgunner.shtml>
76. With permission from Bob Schwartz - Air Crew Wings:
<http://www.ww2wings.com/wings/usaaf/usaafaircrew.shtml>
77. B-17E drawing diagram with permission from Tom Stelzriede -
<http://www.stelzriede.com/warstory.htm>
78. Sinking of the cruiser Mikuma at Midway -
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sinking_of_japanese_cruiser_Mikuma_6_june_1942.jpg



A Special Thanks go out to my 42nd Squadron extended family. Especially to Hal Hall who was most gracious to share his knowledge, research, resources and biography of his brother, Major Earl Hall. His mentorship encouraged me to make this book. In addition, to Gregg Heilman, Paul and Art Stephen, Paul Adler, Phil Gudenschwager and Dr. Joe Goepner for your advice and help in filling in many parts to a big puzzle. But most of all
a big

Thank You!

To my family above (Samantha and Alva) for supporting me on years of research in order to allow me to tell the story of Uncle Joaquin Castro.

guerrero29@comcast.net

Appendix 1
42nd Bombardment Squadron (H) Missions:
18 July 1942 – 1 February 1943.

42nd Bombardment Squadron (H), 11th Bombardment Group (H), 7th Air Force
(1941-January 1943); 13th Air Force (January 1943 -)

Air Force Historical Association, IRIS No. 44028.

Mission Reports, 18 July 1942 – 10 August 1943.

[Note: transcriptions are as accurate as possible, preserving spelling and spacing generally as in the document. The reproduction of the original document is very difficult to read, and most of the hand-written notes are illegible, and so noted. Prepared by Hal]

18 July 1942

The following ships took off from Kahuku, Oahu at 0800, and landed at Christmas Island at 1700.

1st Flite:

Ship #221, Capt. Manierre [in pencil: 42 Bomb Sq]

Ship #071 Capt. Richards

Ship # 420, Capt. Norton

2nd Flite:

Ship #218, Capt. Messerschmitt

Ship #443, Capt. Puerta

Ship # 151, Capt. Wuertelo

3rd Flite:

Ship #155, Capt. Stone

Ship #213 Capt. Hall

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz

19 July 1942

The following ships took off from Christmas Island at 10300 and landed at Canton Island at 1630.

1st Flite:

Ship #221, Capt. Manierre

Ship #071 Capt. Richards,

Ship # 420, Capt. Norton.

The following ships took off from Christmas Island at [illegible] and landed at Canton Island at 1645.

2nd Flite:

Ship #218, Capt. Messerschmitt

Ship #443, Capt. Puerta

Ship # 151, Capt. Wuertelo.

3rd Flite:

Ship #155, Capt. Stone

Ship #213 Capt. Hall

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz.

The above three ships took off from Christmas Island at 1110 and landed at Canton Island at 1745

20 July 1942

The following ships took off from Canton Island at 0645 and landed at Nandi, Fiji at 1415:

1st Flite: :

Ship #221, Capt. Manierre

Ship #071 Capt. Richards,

Ship # 420, Capt. Norton.

The following ships took off from Canton Island at 0700 and landed at Nandi, Fiji at 1430.

2nd Flite:

Ship #218, Capt. Messerschmitt

Ship #443, Capt. Puerta

Ship # 151, Capt. Wuertelo

The following ships took off from Canton Island at 0715 and landed at Nandi, Fiji at 1445:

3rd Flite:

Ship #155, Capt. Stone

Ship #213 Capt. Hall

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz.

(The International Date Line was crossed on the way from Canton Island to Nandi, Fiji.)

22 July 1942

The following ships took off from Nandi, Fiji at 0800 and landed at Plaines des Gaiacs, New Caledonia at 1345.

1st Flite: :

Ship #221, Capt. Manierre

Ship #071 Capt. Richards,

Ship # 420, Capt. Norton.

The following ships took off from Nandi, Fiji at 0820 and landed at Plaines des Gaiacs, New Caledonia at 1415.

2nd Flite:

Ship #218, Capt. Messerschmitt

Ship #443, Capt. Puerta

Ship # 151, Capt. Wuertelo.

The following three ships took off from Nandi, Fiji at 0830 and landed at Plaines des Gaiacs, New Caledonia at 1430.

3rd Flite:

Ship #155, Capt. Stone

Ship #213 Capt. Hall

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz.

23 July 1942

NO MISSIONS THIS DATE.

24 July 1942

The following five ships all went on dawn patrol: T.O. 0600:

Ship #155, Capt. Stone

Ship #213, Capt. Hall

Ship #321, Major Manierre
Ship # 216, Capt. Messerschmitt.

SEARCH:

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton, Out 660 mi. Cont: None 324-334.5
Ship #071, Capt. Richards, Out 700 mi. Cont: None. 355-345.

25 July 1942

The following five ships all went on dawn patrol: T.O. [illegible]

Ship #155, Capt. Stone
Ship #445, Capt. Puerta
Ship #213, Capt. Hall
Ship #321, Major Manierre
Ship # 216, Capt. Messerschmitt.

26 July 1942

The following five ships all went on dawn patrol: T. O. 0600:

Ship #221, Major Manierre
Ship #071, Capt. Richards
Ship #420, Lieut, Norton
Ship #161, Capt. Wuertele
Ship #165, Capt. Stone
Ship #213, Capt. Hall
Ship #442, Lieut. Eberenz

SEARCH

Ship #445, Lieut. Puerta Out 650 Mi. Cont: Two enemy fighters (float type) on water south tip of Indispensable reef. No action 3245. – 334.5.
Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 700 Mi. Cont: None 334.5 – 345

27 July 1942

The following five ships all went on dawn patrol: T.O. 0600:

Ship #221, Major Manierre
Ship #071, Capt. Richards
Ship #420, Lieut, Norton
Ship #161, Capt. Wuertele
Ship #165, Capt. Stone
Ship #213, Capt. Hall
Ship #442, Lieut. Eberenz.

NO MISSIONS THIS DATE.

28 July 1942

The following five ships all went on dawn patrol this date:

Ship #221, Major Manierre
Ship #071, Capt. Richards
Ship #420, Lieut, Norton
Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt
Ship #161, Capt. Wuertesl
Ship #445, Lieut. Puerta
Ship #165, Capt. Stone.

SEARCH

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 600 mi. Cont: none. 334.5-345
Ship #442, Lieut. Eberenz Out 600 mi. Cont: None. 324.5-334.5

29 July 1942

The following four ships went out on dawn patrol: T. O. 0600

Ship # 445, Lieut. Puerta

Ship #216, Lieut. Sorensen

Ship #161, Capt. Wuertele

Ship #071, Capt. Richards.

NO TACTICAL MISSIONS THIS DATE.

30 July 1942

Ship #442, Lieut. Eberenz Swing Compass: Took off at 0700 landed 0830

Ship #216, Lieut. Sprawls Swing Compass: Took off 0700 landed 0850

SEARCH

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Out 600 Mi. Cont: None 334.5 -345

Ship # 156, Capt. Stone Out 900 Mi. Cont: None 324-334

31 July 1942

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt, Ferry Mission to Efate. T.O. 0955 landed 1100.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall to Efate.

SEARCH

Ship #071, Capt. Richards. Out 600 mi. Cont: None. 324-334.5

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton Out 500 mi. Cont: None. 334.5-345

Ship # 526m Col. Saunders, Major Manierre Co-Pilot: Took off from Efate Island at 0615, leading flight of eight and element of two planes. Photographed south and east coast

of Guadalcanal Island. Bombed Lunga Airfield. Bomb hits not observed, no AA or pursuit interceptions, Landed Efate Island at 1530.

1 August 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Special photo mission (no pictures, bad weather.)

Ship #442, Lieut. Eberenz, local test hop.

2 August 1942 [*illegible pencil notation*]

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt. Took off from Efate Island leading three plane element. Landed and gassed up at Espiritu Santo Island. Took off from Santo Island at 0930. Bombed area from Planters' House to Lunga Pt. – Stores and quarters. Landed Santo Island at 1730. All the bombs dropped in the target area. Moderate AA fire. Attacked by three pursuits. Fine hit in airplane – 14 holes. Shot down two Zero type enemy fighters. Pilot received slight wound on forehead as the result of a penetrate shell jacket. Co-Pilot struck in left thigh by armor-piercing shell. He was hospitalized upon landing. 1st Engineer E. C. Davis, received a grasing shot on right ankle.

Ship #445, Lieut. Puerta. Took off from Efate Island at 0648 n three plane element. Landed and gassed up at Santo I. Took off from Santo at 0930. Bombed constructors houses and installations on Lunga Pt. Landed at Santo I at 1730. All bombs dropped in target area. Moderate AA, Attacked by two Zero type airplanes from out of the sun. Three others did not attack. No damage done.

Ship #071, Capt. Richards. Took off from Efate I. in three plane element. Landed at Santo I. and gassed up. T. O. from Santos I. at 0930 and bombed constructors Barracks and Soldiers barracks. Landed at Santo I. at 1730. All bombs dropped in the target area. Moderate AA. Enemy pursuit in air but no interception made.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. A ferry mission to PdG.

3 August 1942

Ship #071, Capt. Richards

Ship #621, Major Manierre

Both the above ships went out on an Interception and Identification mission. Took off at 1100 and landed 1300.

Ship #221, Major Manierre, Ferry Mission, Poppy to Roses. Took off 0700-landed 1030. Ship #155 cracked up on runway at Roses.

NO TACTICAL MISSIONS.

4 August 1942

Ship #071, Capt. Richards. Took off from Santos I. at 0630 leading two plane formation. Bombed individually shore installations at Lunga Pt. Moderate AA, no pursuit interception. All Bombs dropped in target area. Landed Efate I. at 1530.

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta. Took off from Santo I. at 0630, 2nd plane in two plane formation. Bombed individually, dropped on Lunga Pt. Airfield. Could not observe first 7 bombs because of clouds. On the 2nd run the next seven bombs were observed to cross the runway at a 30 degree angle. Attacked by a single Zero type enemy fighter – same shot down. No damage to our plane. Moderate AA.

5 August 1942

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta. Took off from Efate I. Bombed Kukum anti-aircraft installations and storage dump. Landed Efate I. Bombs observed to fall on runway. Large fire observed started in dump area. Moderate AA fire. 5" hole made in left wing. Attacked by 5 enemy pursuit, using individual headon attack method. No damage done.

Ship 420, Lieut. Norton

Ship 221, Major Manierre

Ship 442, Lieut. Eberenz

The above three ships all went to Koumao on this date.

6 August 1942

Ship #221, Capt. Stone. Took off from Santo I. leading two plane formation. Bombed AA installations on Lunga Pt. Could not determine hits through haze. Released 7 bombs on runway and the next four on AA installations. Made a crash water landing off N. coast of Santo Island at 1815 with approximately 30 gal. of gas in tanks on landing. Plane sank in approximately 45 sec. Inboard engine cut out and props feathered on landing. Broke it two parts in aft radio compartment. No casualties. 10 men using one raft. Minor cuts and bruises to all men. Paddled one mi. to Island (Shark Bay) and it took two hours to row. Navy scout bomber sighted crew at 0930, 7 August 1942. Did not pull IFF damaging switches. POP and all other confidential and secret material went down with the plane.

Ship #442, Lieut Eberenz. Took off from Santo I. at 1000. Bombed Lunga Pt. Dropped bombs in train across target quite a large fire started in trees. Light AA, no pursuit interception. Landed Santo I.
NO TACTICAL MISSIONS.

7 August 1942

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton. From Buttons to Roses [illegible] – 1115.

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz From Buttons to Roses 1030-1140.

NO TACTICAL MISSIONS.

8 August 1942

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz, From Efate to Plaines des Gaiacs.
NO TACTICAL MISSIONS.

9 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton Out 600 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #216, Capt. Puerta Out 600 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #071, Capt. Richards Out 600 mi. Cont: None

10 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 700 mi. Cont.: None.

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz Out 700 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Out 700 mi. Cont: None

11 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton Out 800 mi. Cont: None.

12 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton, Out 700 mi. Cont: None. 312-313.

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz, Out 800 mi. Cont: None. 306-312.

Ship #216, Major Maniarre, Buttons to Roses 0760-0900.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Buttons to Roses, 0750 – 0900.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Roses to Buttons, 1015 – 1140.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Buttons to Roses, 1200 – 1316.

13 August 1942

NO MISSIONS THIS DATE.

14 August 1942

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele, Roses to Buttons 0800-0915.

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele, Buttons-Roses-PdG.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Roses to Buttons, 1515 – 1620.

Ship #071, Capt. Richards Roses to Buttons 1515-1630.

15 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #213, Captain Hall. Out 700 mi. Cont.: None.

Ship #071, Captain Richards Out 700 Mi. Cont: None.

Ship #151, Captain Wuertele Nandi to Buttons.

Ship # 420, Lieut. Norton Buttons-Roses-PdG.

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Swing Compass.

16 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Wuertele Out 650 mi. Cont: None 312-316.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Swing compass.

17 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship # 151, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 750 mi. Cont: None. 312-318.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Buttons–Nandi.

18 August 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Bombed enemy shipping at Gizo. No hits observed, the weather was very bad. No damage to own ship.

19 August 1942

Ship #156, Capt. Wuertele, searched. Out 500 mi. Cont: None. Sector 294-300.

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt. Buttons to Roses.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Buttons to Roses to PdG.

20 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Out 700 mi. Cont: 4 DB, 5 surface craft, all enemy. No action of any kind.

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz. Button to Roses. 0830-095.

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz. Roses to Buttons. 1300-1315.

21 August 1942

Ship #214, Major Manierre. Out 700 mi. Cont: 1 small launch, 2 DD's. No action taken. 306-312.

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton Roses to Buttons

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz Roses to Buttons

Ship #442, Capt. Eberenz Buttons to Roses to PdG

22 August 1942

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Out 650 mi. Cont: 15 Hut Village on peak of mountain. Pictures taken. No Action 306-312. Landed at Cactus 1035.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Ferry mission to Cactus, 0730 – 1200.

23 August 1942

Ship #213, Major Manierre and Capt. Hall. Leading the first flight the mission being to attack carriers and force to N. R. about 650 miles. Took off at 1430. Sighted enemy force at 0530 consisting of one carrier, 2 destroyers, and 2 cruisers. Attacked from 12,000'. Made two runs dropping 2 bombs each run. Near misses between carrier and cruisers on the first run. Second run was reported by the crew members to have direct hits on carrier. Several explosions, pictures however did not show evidence. Attacked by 5-7 Zeros, shot down one, possibly two. Returned to base after dark in bad weather. Lieut. [–unther] was killed when eh crashed into some palms on landing.

Ship # 151, Capt. Wuertle. Broke formation believing we were off course, consequently, did not find target and turned back to base with full load of bombs.

24 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship # 420, Lieut. Norton Out 600 mi. Cont: Attacked enemy DD in [Gizo] Harbor. Three 500#. No hits, the bombs failed to release [illegible]first two runs. Attacked once by fighter off Lengo. No damage.

25 August 1942

SEARCH [*illegible pencil notation*]

Ship #425, Capt. Hall Out 750 mi. Cont.: Engaged 4 engine flying boat 50 mi. NW Gizo Island. Elevators shot away and boat believed destroyed. Was circling what appeared to be wreckage when engaged by one Zero. No visible damage to Zero. Two holes shot in own ship. No injuries. [Pencil note: *Pilot Silver Star. Recommended and received Air Medal.*]

26 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 700 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton Out 500 mi. Cont: Noen.

Ship #442, Capt. Wuertele Buttons to Roses 0935-1035

Ship #071, Capt. Richards Roses to Buttons 0910-1030

Ship #071, Capt. Richards Buttons to Roses 1205-1310

Ship #071, Capt. Richards Roses to Buttons 1535-1700

27 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #145, Capt. Eberenz Out 600 mi. Con: None.

Ship #071, Capt. Richards P-400 mission.

28 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton. Out 700 mi. Cont: Own task force of 24 ships. Three empty life boats drifting about two miles apart attempted to sink by gunfire and was unsuccessful.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 700 mi. Cont: Sub sighted off Cape Nahahua, San Cristobal. Weather prevented bombing or strafing.

Ship #071, Capt. Richards. Out 700 mi. Cont: None. Lightning struck nose gun and broke off trailing antenna.

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt. Out Cont: One plane between Renound Island and Gizo I. Was a float type, seen ahead but he stayed about one half mile away, disappeared in about 3 min.

Ship #442, Capt. Wuertele. Roses to Buttons. 100 1218.

Ship # 442, Capt. Wuertele. Buttons to Roses. 1430 1640.

29 August 1942

#442, Capt Wuertele. Roses to Buttons 0715 0835

Ship # 442, Capt. Wuertele, Buttons to Roses 0910 1030

Ship # 442, Capt. Wuertele, Roses to Buttons 1100 1210

Ship # 442, Capt. Wuertele, Buttons to Roses 1300 1430

NO TACTICAL MISSIONS TODAY.

30 August 1942

SEARCH

Ship #215, Capt. Messerschmitt. Our 730 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #218, Capt. Richards. Out 860 mi. Cont: Bombed enemy task force, near miss or hit on battleship or heavy cruiser. Dropped four 500#.

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland. Rose to Buttons.

31 August 1942

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland, Buttons to Roses 0745 0900
Ship #420, Capt. Hall Buttons to PdG
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Roses to Buttons 1035 1130
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Buttons to Roses 1207 1330
NO TACTICAL MISSIONS TODAY.

1 September 1942

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland, Rose to Buttons to Roses 1035 1525
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland, Buttons to Roses 1620 1736
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland, Roses to Buttons 0215 0920
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland, Buttons to Roses 1130 1220
Ship #151, Capt. Eberenz, Photo mission over the Field.
NO TACTICAL MISSING THIS DATE.

2 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Hensley Out 765 mi. Cont: None 312 318
Ship #151, Capt. Eberenz Out 810 mi. Cont: Enemy Tanker directly hit at 1035.
Last seen sinking and burning. Dropped four 55#. Fire encircled bow when hit. Light AA.
No injuries to plane or personnel.
Ship #071, Capt. Richards Out 800 mi. Cont: None Seen building being built at
Gizo Island.
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Roses to Buttons.

3 September 1942

Ship # 442, Capt. Hyland Buttons to Roses. 0900 1015
NOT TACTICAL MISSIONS THIS DATE.

4 September 1942

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland. Roses to Buttons
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland. Button to Roses.

5 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt. Out 700 mi. Cont: None 306 312
Ship #213, Lieut. Norton. Out 600 mi. Cont: 3 enemy destroyers dropped four
500#, but no hits. AA very heavy and poor. No damage to plane.
Ship #071, Capt. Richards. Out 825 mi. Cont: 3 enemy destroyers or cruisers.
Dropped four 500#. No hits, near misses. Light AA before and after run.
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Roses to Buttons 0720 0835
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Buttons to Roses 1010 1130
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Roses to Buttons 1400 1500
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Buttons to Roses 1605 1735

6 September 1942

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Roses to Buttons 0935 1045
Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Buttons to Roses 1315 1420
Ship #071, Capt. Richards Buttons to cactus escort some P-400's
Ship #213, Lieut. Norton Buttons to Cactus escort some P-400's

7 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #071, Lieut. Norton. Out 860 mi. Cont: Four engine flying boat. #1 engine caught fire from 7.7 hit in oil tank, were forced to abandon attack at 0840. No apparent damage inflicted on the enemy. Seven enemy landing barges and one torpedo boat on the beach, Straffed (Reykata Bay) for twenty min. no damage observed. [hole punch] 7.7 in the tail.

Ship #071, Capt. Richards Out for a test hop.

Ship #071, Capt. Richards. Buttons to Cactus.

8 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #071, Capt. Richards. Went out on search mission and failed to return. Later reported shot down by Jap four engine Flying Boat. Sector 306 312. T. O. from Buttons at 0300.

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Roses to Buttons.

Ship #442, Buttons to Roses

9 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship # 216, Capt. Eberenz. Out 750 mi. Cont: enemy 5 dd's, 2 AK. Landed Cactus to escort SBD's to reported enemy task force. T. O. on an air raid warning and returned to base. Strafed six land barges, results not observed. No damage to plane or crew.

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele. Out 600 mi. Cont: Enemy task force 1 HB 8DD's. Dropped four 500#. No hits. Heavy AA. No damage to own plane or crew.

Ship #213, Lieut. Norton. Out 800 mi. Cont: Burning flying boat on reef, believed to be PBLY. Attacked enemy flying boat, did not destroy but made many hits. Damage to own plane: 20 MM in tail and each wing. 7.7 through ball turret, pilot cabin, two hits in #2 engine, 6 others through fuselage. PFS Burns wounded in the leg by 7.7 through ball turret.

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland. Roses to Buttons 0810 0925

10 September 1942

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland. Buttons to Roses to Hickam 0810

Ship #213, Lieut. Norton. Cactus to Buttons -630 0940

Ship #213, Lieut. Norton Buttons to Roses. 1515 1625

NO TACTICAL MISSIONS THIS DATE.

11 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #151, Capt. Eberenz. Out 600 mi. from Cactus. Cont: Straffed installations on Gizo. Encountered small caliber and 20 MM from shore. No damage to plane or crew.
Ship #

12 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt. Out 500 mi. Cont: two transports, 2 DD. 210 mi. out of Cactus. No aa or any action taken.

Ship #420, Capt. Hall Out 800 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #211, Capt. Steedman. Out 500 mi. Cont: Attacked 5 bi-planes 2 float type with inline engines at Gizo Island. Knocked down 2. Noted two white buildings at beach, a dock and scattered buildings in the woods. No injuries to own plane or crew.

Ship #420, Capt. Hall. Roses to Buttons.

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt. Buttons to Cactus.

13 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Stone Out 750 mi. Cont: none.

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele. Out 600 mi. Cont: Nose gun would not work. Shot down one float bi-plane. Three enemy float bi-planes on water and we strafed them. Tail gunner was wounded (Sgt. Bowrie) by MG fire from enemy plane. Guns in both turrets jammed. Own ship: 7.7 in fuselage and in the wing.

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton and Ship # 213, Capt. Hall both part of the striking force that took off at 1300. Flew for five hours without contact with the enemy. Returned to base at 1800.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Rose to Buttons. 0530 0635

14 September 1942

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Ship #213, Lieut. Norton, and Ship #420, Capt. Eberenz were all on one hour alert. These three ships all took off from Buttons at 1300 in search of the enemy who had previously been reported. Flew for approximately six hours without a contact. Returned to Buttons.

15 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt Wuertele. Out 790 mi. Cont: Bombed Reykata Bay. [illegible] hits on buildings, two guns positions silenced. Bombed from [illegible] and made two runs. Two twin engine [illegible] bombers in the [illegible]

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 800 mi. Cont: Enemy task force of [illegible] cruisers, 1DD, and 1SS, 15 miles N of Molombangari. Bombed Reykata Bay and started a number of fires. Made three runs. No AA.

Ship #211, Capt. Eberenz Buttons to Cactus.

Ship #426, Capt. Wuertele Up for compass swing

Ship #426, Major Manierre, Ship #211, Capt. Eberenz, Ship #420, Lieut. Norton all on striking took off at 0800 and returned to base at 0900. No contacts made.

16 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #528, Major Manierre. Out 600 mi. Cont: PBY beached. It appeared to have been shot up badly and the left wing was down in the water. The rest of the plane was above the shallow water. A general swing was made of the islands and shoals below and above Ndeni. On most of the Islands huts and villages were noticed and black natives were observed. There was a group of uncharted islands about 30 miles South of Ndeni.

Ship #211, Capt. Eberenz. Cactus to Roses 0620 103b

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Roses to Buttons 1505 1630

17 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Hensley. Out 500 mi. Cont: 10 enemy flying boats in Gizo Harbor, 3 light cruisers or destroyers, 1 heavy cruiser, aircraft tender, 2 cargo ship, and various other ships dispersed under heavy weather at Blackett Strait. Three fighters came out of the harbor, did not attack. Bombed tender. The hits not observed, pictures taken. AA moderate.

Ship #213, Capt. Eberenz. Out 800 mi. Cont: Bombed Gizo. Dropped one bomb on shore in houses at Harbor all the others went in the water. Pictures taken, AA light. One twin engine float type and one single pontoon zero encountered in air. Machine gun fire was exchanged but did not attack closely and fled into clouds when pursued. No hits on won plane.

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton. Out 800 mi. Cont: dropped seven 300# at construction about Reykata Bay. No direct hits and no apparent damage. No AA observed.

Ship #426, Capt. Wuertele. Out 800 mi. Cont: None

Ship # 214, Capt. Puerta Out 750 mi. Cont: None

18 September 1942

Ship #426, Major Manierre

Ship #445, Capt. Pureta. Both these ships went out for a compass swing.

The following ships were all on striking but did not T.O.:

Ship #216, Capt Messerschmitt

Ship #426, Major Manierre

Ship #151, Capt. Stone

Ship #213, Capt. Hall

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta

19 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #445, Capt. Stone Out 800 mi. Cont: Noen 334 339

Ship #426, Major Manierre Out 600 mi. Cont: None 329 334

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 750 mi. Cont: None. 324 329

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 720 mi. Cont: None 318 324

Ship #523, Capt. Hensley Out 720 mi. Cont: Bombed Reykata, saw no planes in condition to fly, took pictures. No damage noticed. Two wrecked planes on beach. No damage to own plane although there was light AA.

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton stood by on 1 hour alert all the day.

20 September 1942

The following ships were all on striking but did not T.O.:

Ship #426, Major Manierre

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt

Ship #213, Capt. Hall

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton Buttons to Cactus 1305 1700

21 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Out 755 mi. Cont: None

Ship #426, Capt. Wuertele Out 800 mi. Cont: None

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 700 mi. Cont: Bombed Reykata Bay, no opposition, and very little if any damage done. No AA.

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton. Out 799 mi. Cont: Bombed Reykata Bay, no hits made. AA, 7.7, and 20mm very heavy. No damage to own plane. Pictures taken.

Ship #216, Capt. Sorensen. Out 750 mi. Cont: Bombed Gizo Harbor installation with 8 100# Demo. and 2 Incend. Bombs. Hazy over the target, and no AA observed. First 5 bombs were released in train and observed to fall close to nearest buildings on runway. Pictures taken, not damage to own ship.

22 September 1942

The following ships were all on striking but they did not T. O.:

Ship #445, Capt. Wuertele

Ship #213, Capt. Stone

Ship #426, Major Manierre

Ship #420, Lieut. Norton

23 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #426, Major Manierre Out 800 mi. Cont: None

Ship #445, Capt. Hensley Out 750 mi. Cont: None

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Buttons to Tontouta for repairs.

24 September 1942

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 800 mi. Cont: None

Ship #426, Major Manierre Buttons to Roses 1320 1530

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Buttons to Roses 1320 1530

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Buttons to Roses 1320 1530

The above three ships all left this date for nande and a three day rest period.

[illegible pencil notation.]

Ship #420, Lieut Norton On this date Lieut. Norton and crew were reported as missing in action. They were never heard from. [In pencil: "*They were shot down by zeros {illegible.}*"]

25 September 1942

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Buttons to Fantan 0750 1250

This ship and crew was to stay at Nandi for a three days rest period.

26 September 1942

NO MISSIONS. ALL CREWS AT NANDI FOR REST.

27 September 1942

NO MISSIONS. ALL CREWS AT NANDI FOR REST.

28 September 1942

ALL CREWS CALLED IN FROM SOUVA TO GO ON SPECIAL ALERT AT NANDI

29 September 1942

SEARCH

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Out 800 mi. Cont: None 351 357

Ship #426, Lieut. Andrews Out 750 mi. Cont: None 345 351

Ship #216, Capt. Hensley Out 750 mi. Cont: None 357 003

Ship # 445, Capt. Puerta Out 800 mi. Cont: None 003 009

30 September 1942

NO MISSIONS THIS DATE.

1 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 800 mi. Cont: None 351 357

Ship #426, Major Manierre Out 800 mi. Cont: None 003 009

Ship #151, Capt. Stone Out 800 mi. Cont: None 357 003

Ship #445, Lieut. Andrews Stand by for Search.

2 October 1942

The following ships were all on striking 15 min. alert but did not take off:

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele

Ship #425, Capt. Puerta

Ship #216, Capt. Hensley

3 October 1942

Ship #151, Capt Wuertle

Ship #425, Capt. Puerta

Ship #216, Capt. Hensley

The above three ships all went out on a special photographic mission from Nandi.

4 October 1942

ALL MISSIONS CANCELLED DUE TO BAD WEATHER.

5 October 1942

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Fantan to Roses

Ship #426, Major Manierre Fantan to Roses

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Fantan to Roses

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Fantan to Roses

All ships landed at Buttons 1300.

6 October 1942

Ship #426, Capt. Stone Buttons to Cactus

Ship #445, Lieut. Andrews Buttons to Cactus

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. PdG to Roses to Buttons.

7 October 1942

Ship #425, Capt. Stone Out 800 Mi. from Cactus Cont: None 302 312

Ship #445, Lieut. Andrews Out 450 Mi. from Cactus Cont: None 312 322

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Buttons to Roses for repairs.

8 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #426, Major Manierre Out 950 Mi. Cont: None

Ship 213, Capt. Hall. Out 825 mi. Cont: Enemy fighters, 5 DD's, 1 heavy cruiser. Dropped aerial bombs and made overhead passes almost head on. One fighter knocked down. AA very light. Damage to own ship: holes in left wing, aileron,

elevator and navig. glass, deep cut in #2 prop. Heavy cruiser appeared to be on fire, a lot of black smoke.

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Out 600 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Out 450 Mi. Cont: None

All the above ships landed at Cactus after the mission.

9 October 1942

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Out 450 Mi. from Cactus. Cont: None

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 450 mi. from Cactus. Cont: None.

10 October 1942

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Buttons to Cactus

Ship #128, Major Manierre Buttons to Cactus

11 October 1942

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Out 500 miles from Cactus Cont: None Landed at Cactus 305 315

Ship #151, Lieut. Andrews on one hour alert until 1300. No T. O.

12 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Out 500 Mi. from Cactus Cont: None Landed at Cactus 305 315

Ship #535, Capt. Hall. Out 800 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #151, Capt Wuertele Buttons to Cactus

Ship #426, Capt. Hensley Cactus to Buttons

13 October 1942

Ship #151, Major Manierre Buttons to Cactus

Ship #426, Capt. Stone Buttons to Cactus Upon arriving at Cactus it was found that the place was undergoing an air raid, circled the field for over an hour before landing.

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Cactus to Buttons

Ship #445, Lieut. Andrews Buttons to PdG 1400 1745

14 October 1942

Ship #151, Major Manierre Cactus to Buttons

Ship #426, Capt. Stone Cactus to Buttons

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Roses to Buttons

Ship #426, Capt. Hall on 15 min alert took off at 1500 and flew about 575 miles in search of a Jap task force. No contacts made. Returned to base at 2240.

15 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Captain Messerschmitt Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #426, Major Manierre

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta

Ship #216, Capt. Stone

The above three ships all took off at 0745. The mission being to bomb enemy ships at Kukum. Arrived at the target area at 1145 and there were four enemy transports one of which was burning, about [illegible] cruisers, 5-7 destroyers. Went in at 10,000' indicated

air speed 180 indicated. No bombs dropped by Major Manierre and Capt. Puerta on first run due to solenoid trouble. Capt. Stone dropped four bombs on an individual run. The first run was made on two transports close together. The second run was made on a single transport by Major Manierre and Capt. Puerta, 5 bombs dropped by each. Close miss by Major Manierre, possible hit by Capt. Puerta in formation. Enemy aircraft about 12 Zeros attacked during both runs on target. Pictures were taken of one shot down by Major Manierre's crew. Enemy AA was very heavy and concentrated, all planes returned safely to the Base, although many bullet holes and pieces of equipment were effected so as to render them useless.

RESULTS: Possible hits on transport, three to four Zeros shot down.

CASUALTIES: M/Sgt. K. Lawton shot by 7.7 which came through bombardier's window, glancing off bombsight stabilizer and hit him in the mouth. He was immediately hospitalized on landing. Landed at 0345.

16 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Hall. Out 800 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #213, Capt. Puerta, Took off at 1300 and bombed Kukumgonga. All the bombs hit the target. Observed two Zeros crash into the sea. Zeros set fire to sea tender McFarlane. #1 engine went out, returned to Cactus on three engines.

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Took off from Buttons at 1300 for Cactus. Landed base at 2200.

Ship #426, Capt. Hensley Buttons to Cactus 0447 0834 Went out in the afternoon looking for Jap task force, could not make contact;

17 October 1942

Ship #425, Major Manierre

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Both these ships were on striking and they did not take off.

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Swing compass 1600 1700

CORRECTION 17 Oct. 1942 [separate sheet inserted.]

Major Manierre in Ship #4426, leading six ship formation. Bombed shore installations and troop concentrations, west of Point Cruz in Kukumbanga area. No A A and not pursuit interception. Returned to Base, encountered bad weather there, and finally landed in heavy rain. All six ships returned safely in spite of the bad weather.

18 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 750 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #445, Lieut. Andrews PdG to Roses to Buttons

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele Buttons to Cactus (Ferry Gasoline)

19 October 1942

Ship #216, Capt. Puerta Out 800 Mi. Cont: Was one white man on Ontony Java, signaled with flags, dropped him food.

Ship #426, Lieut. Andrews Buttons to Cactus

Ship #151, Capt. Wuertele

20 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #444, Capt. Stone Out 700 Mi. Cont: Seen one 25 Ft. sail boat with white cross on the top of the cabin. No action. Could not identify the boat.

The following ships were all on striking but did not T.O.:

Ship #426, Major Manierre

Ship #151, Capt. Hall

Ship #431, Capt. Hensley

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta

21 October 1942

Ship #216, Lieut. Sorensen Buttons to Roses 0915 1030

Ship #126, Lieut. Hensley Spare search ship

Ship #442, Lieut. Hyland Roses to Buttons from Hickam

Ship #425, Major Manierre

Ship #444, Capt. Hall

Ship #451, Andrews

Ship #445, Capt. Wuertele The above four ships were all on one hour alert and did not take off.

22 October 1942

Ship #442, Liut. Hyland Swing compass over field 0815 0940

The following ships were on one hour alert but did not take off:

Ship #444, Capt. Stone

Ship #443, Capt. Puerta

Ship #426, Lieut. Andrews

Ship #431, Lieut. Hensley

23 October 1942

Ship #151, Lieut. Hensley Buttons to Roses for repairs

Ship #060, Lieut. Hensley Roses to Buttons

The following ships were on one hour alert and did not take off:

#436, Major Manierre

#445, Capt. Wuertele

#444, Lieut. Hyland

#431, Capt. Hall

#403, Lieut. Thomas

24 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #445, Lieut. Andrews Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #409, Lieut. Hyland Out 725 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #313, Capt. Hall. one hour slow time on plane.

The following three ships were all on striking and took off at 0545:

Ship #426, Major Manierre

Ship #403, Capt. Puerta

Ship #444, Capt. Stone The target was and Enemy Carrier Task Force approaching Cactus from the NE. The striking group could not find the task force and all planes returned to the base. [pencil addition] *Went out 600 miles, then weather got bad in frontal area.*

25 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship 444, Capt. Hall. Out 800 mi. Cont: 1 CA, 3 DD, 3 Zeros land base came in at once from rear and above. Climbed into the clouds. No damage done to plane or personnel.

Ship #431, Lieut. Hensley Out 750 Mi. Cont: 1 single engine plane, 1HB, 3DD, and two cargo ships. One four engine flying boat shot down by crew. AA very heavy mostly broadsides. No damage to own plane or crew.

Ship #445, Capt. Wuertele Out 800 Mi. Cont: 5 DD's, AA very light. No damage. [pencil notation] *Capt. Wuertele shot down [illegible] by. . .*

Ship #4426, Lieut. Andrews

Ship #403, Lieut. Hyland

Both these ships members of the striking group took off at 1045 After searching without contacting the enemy at any time the planes all returned to their base.

26 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #223, Capt. Puerta Out 785 Mi. Cont: Sighted one float type monoplane but it did not attack. Fired upon by ground installations at Ronnel Island, no damage to plane.

Ship #444, Lieut. Sprawls Out 800 Mi. Cont: One float type monoplane 3000 yards away, did not attack

Ship #403, Lieut. Levy Out 720 Mi. Cont: Sighted 4 – 6 Zeros N.W. of Reykata Bay. Flew low over Reykata Bay. Enemy 20mm AA made hits in rudder control cables, radio compartment, navigators compartment and right wing. T/Sgt. Shepherd (Nav) wounded badly in left shoulder and upper left arm. Sgt. Berdon Radio Oper. wounded badly in the leg. Sgt. Berdon operated the radio all the way back to the base, after being propped up to the set. He later had his leg amputated above the knee at the Cut 1 Hosp.

Ship #431, Lieut. Hensley Escorted fighters to Cactus

Ship #213, Capt. Hall

Ship #534, Capt. Conradi Both these ships members of the striking group took off at 1015: a six plane formation dropped 24 500# from 20,000'. Bombs all fell beyond the BB, real close misses. No damage observed, No aa or fighters. All ships returned to base safely.

27 October 1942

NO MISSIONS TODAY.

28 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #442, Lieut. Hyland Out 650 mi. Cont: None 318-324

Ship #216, Lieut. Sorensen Roses to Buttons 1250 1410

29 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #523, Capt. Levy Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Buttons to Roses 2330 1800

30 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #403, Capt. Conradi Out 545 Mi. Cont: None

31 October 1942

SEARCH

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 700 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Out 750 mi. Cont: None.

1 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #431, Capt. Hensley Out 500 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #444, Capt. Sprawls Out 500 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Buttons to PdG. 1405 1730

The following ships all went out on a bombing mission this date:

Ship #216, Capt. Puerta Took off from Buttons at 0403 and was over the target at 0745 (Kukambonga). Bombed alone from 7500', and all the bombs dropped in the target area. No AA or fighter interception.

Ship #215, Capt. Sorensen Target: (Kukambonga [illegible] River) All the bombs released in 100' intervals All hit in target area. AA none.

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Over the target at 0830 at 5000'. All the bombs dropped in and on the left of the target area. No AA.

Ship #2426, Capt. Levy Over the target area at 0840 at 4000 feet. Six of the bombs dropped in the beach the rest in the water.

All the ships returned to base unharmed.

2 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #451, Capt. Conradi Out 750 Mi. Cont: 17 DD's, and 4 CL, very light AA, no damage. Landed at Cactus.

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Tontouta to Buttons.

The following ships were on striking and did not T. O.:

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #421, Capt. Levy

The following combat crew left for Auckland, N.Z. this date:

Major Manierre, Capt. Messerschmitt, Capt. Hensley, plus Capt. Sorensen minus crew.

3 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #431, Capt. Conradi Out 800 Mi. from Cactus Cont: None Returned to Buttons.

The following ships were on striking but did not take off.

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta

Ship #213, Capt. Hall

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #2426, Capt. Levy

4 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #451, Lieut. Woodruff Out 700 Mi. Cont: None

The following ships were all on striking and did not take off:

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #2426, Capt. Levy

The following crews left for Auckland, N. Z. on this date: Capt. Hall and Capt. Steedman.

5 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #213, Capt. Sprawls Out 800 Mi. Cont: None 310-316

Ship #4426, Lieut. Thomas Out 800 Mi. Cont: None 316-322

The following ships were all on striking and they did not take off:

Ship #403, Capt. Puerta

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #2426, Capt. Levy

Ship #216, Capt. Conradi

6 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #426, Lieut. Harp Out 750 Mi. Cont: one wrecked sampan S. W. of Wainakai Bay.

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Out 800 Mi. Cont: 3 AK, 3DD, Offshore at Cactus. The AKs were evidently unloading. Saw what looked like a double row of tents in one cove of 1000 ships bay.

7 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #442, Capt. Conradi Out 780 Mi. Cont: 11DD, very light AA, no damage.

Ship #4426, Capt. Puerta Escort P-39's to Cactus

Ship #128, Capt. Levy Escort P-39's to Cactus remain over night.

The following ships were on striking and did not take off:

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #431, Lieut. Woodruff

8 November 1942

Ship #4425, Capt. Puerta Cactus to Buttons

Ship #128, Capt. Levy Cactus to Buttons

The following ships were on striking and did not take off:

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #215, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #403, Capt. Conradi

Ship #4426, Lieut. Thomas

9 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #403, Lieut Thomas Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

The following ships were on striking and did not take off:

Ship #44, Capt. Puerta

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #431, Conradi

10 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Out 785 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #426, Lieut. Harp Out 776 Mi. Cont: Eight washed up planes on the Beach at Reykata Bay, none apparently serviceable.

11 November 1942

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Swing compass

The following ships were on striking but did not take off:

Ship #403, Capt. Puerta

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #2426, Capt. Levy

Ship #216, Lieut. Woodruff

Ship #213, Capt. Conradi

12 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Out 750 Mi. Cont: 2BB, 1SL, 6DD. Intense AA, No damage. Five Zeros attacked B-17 at 1000'. The lower turret was out, tail gun went out, and the top turret would not fire long bursts. One Zero shot down cracked up in the water, one damaged maybe more. Damage to #445 two 20MM hits in the wing, few 7.7.

Ship #213, Capt. Conradi Out 770 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #426, Capt. Levy Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

The following ships were on striking and did not take off:

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #218, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #431 To Roses for repairs

13 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #?11, Lieut. Harp Out 720 Mi. Cont: Sighted large Jap Task Force, two small boats burning. AA very light, no damage.

Ship #060, Lieut. Thomas Out 800 Mi. Cont: 4CL, 8DD, 12AM location ??4 MI, NW cactus. Light AA. BB observed at 1050 great clouds of slate gray smoke, 5DD, circling around it. DD's fired at plane ?pen flashing of identification. AA from getting close and I could not stay around. Two miles off shore of Lunga 2DD, on fire, 1 ship sinking (unidentified).

Ship #445, Capt. Puerta Buttons to Roses 1340 1445

Ship #403, Capt. Puerta Roses to Buttons 1540 1645

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls on striking took off at 0545. Target: Japanese Naval Force moving in on Cactus. Searched in flight led by Capt. Lucas and could not find target. Ran into front and then returned to base.

14 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #128, Capt. Hyland Out 700 Mi. Cont: Large slick looked rather recent, lots of debris, and about 60 men of raft and observed men getting aboard, definitely white men.

Ship #442, Capt. Levy on striking and took off: Closed Diamond in flight led by

Major Stewart. Target: Large Jap transport. Dropped 4-500 lb. bombs at 17000' and all were near misses, no other bombing observed. Sighted a 20 ships convoy, [illegible] of the ships were burning and was badly damaged. 10-12 Zeros were around us during the bombing, rear gunner saw one Zero fall (this was not collaborated.)

Ship #213, Capt. Conradi was #2 position in flight led by Major Ridings. The target was the same and we dropped 4-500 lb bombs. Bombs not observed, no AA, and no interception by fighters.

Ship #403, Capt. Puerta Dropped 4-500 lb. bombs on the same target, and did not see any direct hits. The AA was very light and poor. One Zero was shot down.

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls. Dropped 4-500 lb. bombs on the same target. All the bombs were very close and may have caused some damage. No AA or fighter interception.

15 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #444, Lieut. Harp Out 775 Mi. Cont: None (Used 431st crew)

Ship #415, Lieut. Thomas Out 800 Mi. Cont: Approximately 50 men in water 35 miles off Cactus, they waved from a yellow raft. Three enemy destroyers burning, abandoned, 3 enemy cruisers. No AA.

Ship #2428, Capt. Levy Out 800 Mi. Cont: 4DD, 4CL, and three small vessels. 12-15 float Zeros at Reykata Seaplane Base. Four of five of them took off but did not have a chance to attack as the B-17 flew into the clouds.

The following three ships were all on striking and T. O.:

Ship #213, Capt. Conradi

Ship #216, Capt. Puerta both these ships loaded with 4-500 lb. bombs searched in vain for target (Transport ship). All ships appeared fully destroyed and so returned to base with bombs. No troops or supplies evident along shore of Cactus.

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Sighted Task Force and all ships were burning with the exception of one. Dropped 4-500 lb. bombs on the one ship but no direct hits made. Sighted life raft with men on it about 30 miles SW of San Cristobal. No AA or damage to own plane.

16 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #213, Capt. Sowers Out 800 Mi. Cont: Two burning enemy vessels, three life boats drifting empty 5-15 miles from Cactus.

The following ships were on striking and did not take off:

Ship #442, Capt. Ryland

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls

The following combat personnel returned from a rest in N.Z.: Major Manierre, Capt. Messerschmitt, Capt. Hensley, Capt. Sorensen.

17 November 1942

Ship #213, Major Manierre Buttons to Cactus

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls Buttons to Cactus

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Buttons to Cactus

SEARCH

Ship #409, Capt. Hensley Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #2426, Capt. Messerschmitt Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #535, Lieut. Thomas Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #060, Capt. Puerta Out 800 Mi. Cont: None. Landed on Cactus 1220

for repairs, took off immediately after.
Ship #222, Capt. Sorensen Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

18 November 1942. STRIKING FORCE TOOK OFF

Ship #216, Capt. Sprawls arrived over Buin area at 0830. Made first bomb run and no bombs dropped as leaders bombs hung. The target was a large AK and it was stationary. Dropped 4-1000 lb. bombs at 13,000'. All the bombs were dropped on the lead plane in formation (Maj. Sewart), Although order received Bombadier had no time to sight for range. Navigator was the only member to observe the bombing and he through drift meter. One near miss and two further away, one bomb unseen. Other bombing observed: 2-3 near misses on same ship 2-3 near misses on another ship. No burning ships observed upon leaving the target. The aa was very heavy during the bombing runs. Zeros shot down by Bombadier and Upper turrett. Damage to B-17: Gash in fuselage by a 20mm. This shell wounded Corp. Ciammars [?] left waist gunner who courageously stayed at his post until the attack was over. Four 7,7 shells in the BB door.

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland. Over the target at 0810 and dropped 4-1000 lb. bombs on the leader. Possibly one direct hit on the bow of one ship. Small amount of smoke was coming out form the ship. AA from the land was very poor and light, but the AA from the ships was very heavy and accurate. Zeros attacked us upon leaving the target and one of them was shot down.

Ship #213, Major Manierre Attacked enemy shipping at Tonelei Harbor and made one run. Leader couldn't drop and made a second run on an enemy cargo ship and as leader could not drop the flight dropped on Major Manierre's Bombadier S/Sgt. Noble. Each plane dropped 4-1000 lb. bombs except lead ship. Bombs scored several hits and many near misses The ship was reported to be sunk by Lt. Chambers who arrived shortly after we left. The AA was extremely heavy. As we left the target area we were attacked by about 15-20 Zeros. They made direct frontal and side attacks. Several Zeros were shot down by the flight. The lead ships Pilot and Co-Pilot (Lt. Lee and Major Sewart) [pencil addition: *were killed in action by Zero 7.7mm.*] Col. Saunders took over and as two engines were out he made a water landing near Inga Island. The rest of the flight circled until he landed safely. Co. Saunders and remainder of the crew were picked up later. RESULTS: the cargo vessel sunk. 4-5 Zeros destroyed one B-17 shot down with Pilot and Co-Pilot killed by 7.7.
[pencil notation: *Recommend {illegible} Medal.*]

[The notebook sheet(s) containing the mission reports for 19 November 1942 through the first part of the report for 28 November 1942 are missing from the original copy in the Air Force Historical Association files. Lieut. Joaquin Castro's personal flight logs note between 2 November 1942 and 28 November 1942 note "Gone to New Zealand for a rest."]

28 November 1942

Crew got two hits on two Zeros. On the Major's ship T/Sgt. Brewster, Cpl. Stephanik and Caviness together, and Lt. Lewis knocked down Zeros. #216 was damaged with 20mm throught one of the main spars. Some pictures taken. Ship #643 returned on three engines. All personnel returned without injury. Ship #403, Capt. Hall searched out 750 mi. Cont: None.

29 November 1942

Ship #216, Capt. Messerschmitt Cactus to Buttons for repairs.

Ship #643, Capt. Sorensen Cactus to Buttons for repairs.

SEARCH

Ship #134, Capt. Levy Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

30 November 1942

SEARCH

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman Out 750 Mi. Cont: None

The following ships were on striking from Cactus and did not take off:

Ship #444, Major Manierre

Ship #213, Capt. Hensley

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #525, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #535, Capt. Conradi

CORRECTION 30 November 1942. [separate sheet inserted]

Captain searching out of Cactus. Photographed Buka Passage, Kieta Harbor, Kilului Airport, Tonolieu and Shortland Harbor. Contacted 24 enemy vessels in Shortland Harbor. Intercepted by 6 Zeros at Choisiel Island, had a running fight for about 20 minutes. Four aerial bombs were dropped on us, and we knocked down two fighters which crashed into Choisiel Island.

1 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman Went out 450 miles from Cactus and didn't make any contacts.

The following ships were on striking from Cactus and did not take off:

Ship #444, Major Manierre

Ship #213, Capt. Hensley

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #525, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #535, Capt. Conradi

2 December 1942

The following ships were on alert from Cactus all T. O. at 1300

Ship #444, Major Manierre for Buttons.

Ship #213, Capt. Hensley

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #525, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #535, Capt. Conradi

3 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #431, Capt. Hall. Out 500 mi. Cont: None.

Ship #213, Capt. Hensley Out 500 Mi. From Cactus returned to Buttons. Cont: None

Ship #403, Capt. Sorensen on striking. No. T. O.

Ship #215, Capt. Levy Out 750 Miles Cont: None

4 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship # 415, Capt. Sorensen Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #403, Capt. Sorensen Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #213, Capt. Messerschmitt Buttons to Nandi and then on to Hickam Field for repairs.

The following ships were on striking and did not take off:

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #445, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #431, Capt. Conradi

5 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

The following ships were all on striking and did not take off:

Ship #213, Captain Hall

Ship #431, Capt. Hensley

Ship #444, Major Manierre

Ship #445, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #403, Capt. Levy

6 December 1942

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman Buttons to Cactus T. O. at 1300

The following ships were all on striking and did not take off:

Ship #444, Major Manierre

Ship #445, Capt. Sorensen

Ship #431, Capt. Sprawls

Ship #213, Capt. Hall

Ship #442, Capt. Hensley

7 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #426, Capt. Sprawls Out 500 Mi. Cont: None 292-298

Ship #445, Lieut. Harp Out 800 Mi. Cont: None 298-304

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman at Cactus did not fly.

The following ships were all on striking and did not take off:

Ship #431, Capt. Hensley

Ship #213, Capt. Hall

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #444, Capt. Levy

8 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #445, Capt. Levy Out 800 Mi. Cont: None 298-304

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman Out from cactus searched 425 miles. Cont: 5 enemy vessels and no action. Returned to Cactus.

The following ships were all on striking and did not take off:

Ship #426, Capt. Sorensen

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland

Ship #444, Capt. Hall

Ship #431, Capt. Hensley

9 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #445, Major Manierre Out 800 Mi. Cont: None Rear turret knocked off plane when parking it in the bunker.

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman Searched 310 miles out of Cactus Cont: 24 enemy vessels. #2 engine out and #4 on fire returned to Cactus.

The following ships were all on striking and took off at 0445:

Ship #442, Capt. Hyland. Bombed Munda Pt. Airport with 20-100 lb. bombs. All the bombs landed in the target area. Fairly accurate AA about 4" stuff, but no hits. Landed Buttons 1615.

Ship #126, Capt. Sorensen. Bombed Munda Pt. Airport with 20-100 lb. bombs. All bombs landed in the target area. AA very close. No damage to own ship. Landed Buttons Because of engine trouble.

Ship #444, Capt. Hall and Ship #431, Capt Hensley. Dropped all the bombs on Munda Pt. Airport in formation. All the bombs hit on the runway. 3" AA altitude was fine but the deflection was off. Landed at Cactus (both ships).

10 December 1942

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman at Cactus. Did not fly.

Ship #442, Capt. Sprawls Buttons to Cactus

Ship #444, Capt. Hall. Ship #431, Capt. Hensley: Capt. Hall leading five ship formation, Capt. Hensley in #2 position. Bombed large tanker with 4-1000 lb. bombs each, in Tenolei Harbor. Had escort of 4 P-38's. Scored one direct hit on the stern and several near misses. Heavy AA, altitude good but the deflection slightly off. Five enemy fighters one of which made attack and damaged an engine on #4 ship in the formation (Capt. Thomas). Fighter that made the attack was shot down by P-38 as he cleared the bomber formation. Lt. Whiteley of this Squadron flew as Co-pilot with Capt. Darby in ship #059, in #3 position.

11 December 1942

Ship #128, Capt. Levy Returned to base because of bad weather had already searched 450 Mi. Cont: None.

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman at Cactus did not fly.

Capt. Hall in Ship #444, and Capt. Hensley Ship #431 went out from Cactus on the following bombing missions: Capt. Hall in #2 position and Capt. Hensley in #3 position with Capt. Sullivan leading bombed Munda Pt. Airfield with 20-100 lb. bombs each, form 18,000'. Hits not observed because of clouds just past bomb release line. Believe all bombs hit on land which would necessitate their reaching the target. No AA or fighter interception.

Ship #442, Capt. Sprawls at Cactus did not take off.

12 December 1942

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman Cactus to Buttons.

SEARCH

Ship #415, Capt. Hyland Out 770 Mi. Cont: None 292 304

Ship #425, Lieut. Thomas Out 800 Mi. Cont: 1 enemy destroyer, heavy AA, but no damage done.

Ship #442, Capt. Sprawls. Searched from Cactus to Buka. Cont: one unidentified ship (transport) no action.

The following ships were on striking and did not take off:

Ship #232, Capt. Sorensen
Ship #425, Capt. Levy

13 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #425, Capt. Conradi Out 775 Mi. Cont: None
Ship #444, Capt. Hyland (with houx and crew) Out 700 miles Cont: None
Ship #442, Capt. Sprawls search out of Cactus to Shortland and Tonelei. Cont: 27 enemy ships, 3 hugh flying boats on the water. Very light AA, no damage. On the return to Buttons at 19,000' ice started forming on the wings making the ships hard to handle. Landed Buttons.

The following ships were on alert but did not take off:

Ship #213, Capt. Hall
Ship #403, Capt. Sorensen

14 December 1942

Ship #403, Capt. Sorensen Buttons to Cactus
Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Bombing mission. Loaded with 10-100 lb. bombed Munda Pt. airfield. Dropped all bombs to the right of the runway at about a 20 degree angle. Lost formation due to bad weather and made the bombing run alone. Landed Cactus to refuel and returned to Buttons.

Ship #403, Capt. Hensley. Bombing mission. Loaded with 10-100 lb. bombs and dropped all bombs on Munda Pt. Airfield. All the bombs dropped in the target area. A 3" AA shell went through the right horizontal stabilizer but did not explode. No injuries to plane or crew members. Returned to Buttons.

Ship #214, Capt. Hyland. Bombing mission. Loaded with 10-100 lb. bombs bombed Munda Pt. Airfield. All the bombs dropped in the target area. AA was very heavy but did not make any hits. Landed Buttons.

Ship #126, Capt. Levy. Bombing mission. Loaded with 10-100 lb. bombs bombed Munda Pt. Airfield. All the bombs dropped in the target area. AA heavy, not hits on ship. Returned to Buttons.

15 December 1942

Ship #442, Capt. Sorensen. Spare search ship at Cactus.
NO TACTICAL MISSIONS THIS DATE.

16 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #442, Capt. Sorensen. Searched from Cactus, T. O. 0230: Flak over Choisenl Island, Bougainville (Shortland, Kieta, and Buin) Reykata Bay and One Thousand Ships Bay. No contact made.

The following ships took off from Buttons 0700 for Bombing:

Ship # 487, Capt. Levy
Ship #631, Capt Hyland
Ship #123, Capt. Hensley
Ship #213, Capt. Hall
Ship #403, Capt. Steedman
Ship #415, Lieut. Thomas

Target: Munda Pt. airfield. On the way to the airfield Capt. Steadman lost the formation and the five remaining planes went on without him. A total of 99 100 lb. bombs were drooped by the five ships. All bombs hit in the middle of the target. Attacked

by 12 Zeros on the way out after dropping the bombs. Damage to own planes and personnel: #122, Prop control cable shot up. #415, Lt. Thomas lost #4 engine and #213, Capt. Hall got a 20 mm. hit in the left wing and 7.7 in bomb bay oxygen system. Sgt. Stevenson Capt. Halls crew was hit in the left shoulder by a 7.7 and continued to operate the radio. Ship #321 Capt. Hyland, was shot down. Right after the Captain made a water landing a message was sent to Buttons requesting a PBY for rescue, reply to which was "amplify." (BIG HELP). At this point Sgt. Steadman rejoined the formation and the ships all returned to Cactus. Capt. Hensleys crew claims 3 Zeros this mission.

16 December 1942. 2nd mission.

Ship #487, Capt. Hall

Ship #437, Capt. Brewer

Ship #214, Capt. Charters

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman. All ships reloaded with 20-100 lb. bombs and took off (1600) to bomb supply dump and bivouac area to NE of runway at Munda Pt. Clouds interfered with bombing runs but bombs believed dropped in target area. Had fighter escort of 8-P38's. No aerial opposition and very little AA. Landed Cactus.

17 December 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Hyland. Returned from Cactus. Several members of this crew along with Sgt. Stephens from Capt. Halls crew were sent to hospital for treatment. Following is the account of Capt. Hylands water landing: Ship #521, Capt. Hyland. Took off from Buttons at 0645. Six planes of which I was #3 of the first element led by Capt. Hall. Arrived over target at 1158 and sighted Zeros who did not attack until we had dropped our bombs. All our bombs hit in the target area. Then after turning the formation into the enemies attack we were flying straight for a second. A Zero leveled off ahead of us and come straight for me, firing as he came. He hit my #1 and #2 eng. #1 engine began to wind up about 3000 RPM and #2 was hit in the oil tanks. I couldn't feather either of the engines. On subsequent attacks our ball turret was hit in three places & a whole line of hits appeared in the nose. I decided to prepare to bail out as ship was vibrating terribly. Capt. Hylands Water Landing Cont. *[on new page]* However this soon ceased and we continued our decent with Capt. Hensley covering us. The vibrations started again and we began to lose control and so we landed in the water. The ship stayed afloat for about one minute and 15 seconds. We all paddled to the nearest shoreline and awaited rescue. A PBY picked us up at 1713 and we landed at Cactus at 1845. Minor cuts and bruises to all members of the crew. No serious injuries.

17 December 1942 Cont'd.

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman Took off at 0600.

Ship #487, Capt. Hall

Ship #214, Capt. Levy

Ship #122, Capt. Hensley

Ship #437, Capt. Brewer

Ship #060, Capt. Kinney Loaded with 8-500 lb. bombs the six ships went after the runway at Munda Pt. 1st. Flight dropped their bombs to the left of the runway. The 2nd flight dropped four bombs on the runway and the remainder on to the left of the runway. Capt. Brewers bombs failed to release and his bombsight was out and he then came up and got on Capt. Halls wing. Three more runs were made and on the final run all the bombs were dropped. No aerial opposition and little AA. Landed Cactus at 0930.

18 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #217, Capt. Sprawls Out 600 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #431, Capt. Conradi Out 775 Mi. Cont: None

The following ships all took off on a bombing mission:

Ship #487, Capt. Hall

Ship #122, Capt. Hensley

Ship #403, Capt. Steedman

Ship #814, Capt. Charters

Ship #437, Capt. Levy. All ships loaded with 20-100 lb. bombs. Took off from Cactus at 0530. Capt. Charters lost prop governor at 0900 and returned to Cactus. Went after supply dump and bivouac area. The weather on the way to the target was rotten, and finally managed to get above and around it. At the target the weather was good. A total of 80 bombs was dropped in the target area covering it thoroughly. Subsequent reports from Coast Watcher reported main supply dump hit, ammunition dump hit, and camp ground of 500 men. Had fighter escort of 8-P38s but lost contact with them prior to the bombing. No aerial opposition and very little AA. All ships returned safely to Cactus.

18 December 1942 NIGHT MISSION

Ship #122, Capt. Hensley. Took off from Cactus at 2300. Target: Kahili Airfield. Over target at 0100 and dropped 8-100 lb. bombs, dropping at the end of the runway. At 0216 dropped 3-100 lb. bombs on s. end of the runway, no hits observed. At 0315 dropped 3-100 lb. bombs across the center of the field. At 0345 dropped 5-100 lb. bombs on the beach area at end of runway. Left the target at 0355. Very little AA, and on aerial opposition. Returned to Cactus.

19 December 1942

The following all returned from Cactus this date:

Ship #487, Capt. Hall

Ship #132, Capt. Hensley

Ship #415, Lieut. Thomas.

Ship #214, Capt Levy did not return from Cactus. Flew a nite mission. T. O. at 1100 & bombed Munda Pt. Over target at 1230, dropped 20-100# and 2 cases beer bottles. All in target area. Left 0415.

20 December 1942

Ship #213, Capt. Sprawls Test hop to Roses.

Ship #242, Capt. Sorensen Test hop to Roses.

Ship #214, Capt. Levy No mission.

21 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #442, Capt. Sorensen. Out 800 Mi. Cont: Saw oil slick and a couple of boats, seen some Australians in a small boat near Ongtona, Java. Landed Buttons 1630.

Ship #2426, Capt. Steedan. Buttons to Cactus.

Ship #431, Capt. Conradi Buttons to Cactus.

Lt. Houx and crew flew to Cactus as passengers and will pick up a ship on arrival.

Capt. Levy and crew returned from Cactus in Ship #211 as passengers.

22 December 1942

Ship #2426, Capt. Steedman. Took off from Cactus at 0930, the target being Munda Pt. Airfield. Dropped 20-100 lb. bombs on Navigators ETA. Made 7 runs and were over target for two hours. Landed at Cactus.
Lt. Houx at Cactus, no mission.

23 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #436, Major Manierre Out 800 Mi. Cont: None
Ship #122, Capt. Hensley Out 800 Mi. Cont: None
Ship # 227, Capt. Hall. Out 800 mi. Cont.: None.
Ship #444, Capt. Sprawls Buttons to Cactus.
Ship #2426, Capt. Steedman. Took off from Cactus at 1015 flying formation. Dropped 20-100 lb. bombs on Munda Pt. Airfield. Bombs all very far from target, AA very heavy. Landed at Cactus 1415.
Ship # , Lt. Houx. Bombed Munda Pt. Airfield with 20-100 lb. bombs. All bombs hit in the target area. No AA, or damage to plane, landed at Cactus.

24 December 1942

SEARCH

Ship #442, Capt. Sorensen Out 800 Mi. Cont: None
Ship #403, Capt. Levy Out 725 Mi. Cont: One Mitsubishi 96 shot at him and made a few Hits. Not damage to own ship.
Ship #2426, Capt. Steedman Cactus to Buttons.
Lt. Houx at Cactus, no mission.

25 December 1942

Ship #416, Lt. Houx. Bombed Kahili with 4-1000 lb Bombs. One hit on the taxi strip, and one of the left of the runway. No damage to own plane or crew. Returned to Buttons.

Ship #444, Capt. Sprawls. Searched out of Cactus and from 24,000' photographed Buka Airfield and Passage, Kaieta Airfield, and the shoreline of Boganville. Let down to 15,000' and photographed Reykata Bay and returned to Base.

26 December 1942

Ship #428, Lt. Thomas Buttons to Cactus
Ship #444, Capt. Sprawls Cactus to Buttons
Ship #442, Capt. Hall, searched. Out 800 miles. Cont: None.
Ship #415, Capt Hensley, searched. Out 800 miles, Cont: None.
Ship #431, Capt. Conradi. Buttons to Cactus.

27 December 1942

Ship #145, Capt. Sorensen, searched. Out 750 Mi. Cont: None

28 December 1942

The following named combat crews left for Port Moresby this date:

Major Manierre
Ship #122, Capt. Puerta
Ship #413, Capt. Hall
Ship #643, Capt. Hensley
Ship #437, Capt. Sorensen

Ship #415, Capt. Steedman.

Lt. O. D. Thomas in Ship #428 was reported as having not returned from a search mission. It is believed that he was attacked by Zeros and possibly shot down.

[The notebook sheet(s) containing the mission reports for 29 December 1942 through the first part of the report for 8 January 1943 are missing from the original copy in the Air Force Historical Association files.] 8 January 1943. Cont'd.

Damage to own plane: #4 engine was shot out 2 sq. feet of skin shot away from right wing by 20 mm fire. Two Zeros were shot down by crew members. Landed Cactus.

9 January 1943

Ship #128, Capt. Puerta Cactus to Buttons

10 January 1943

NO MISSIONS TODAY

11 January 1943

Ship #413, Capt. Sorensen Buttons to Cactus

12 January 1943

Ship #442, Capt. Hall. Search. Out 800 mi. Cont: None

Ship #413, Capt. Sorensen. Searched out of Cactus. Flew over the northern part of Bouganville and back down over San Isabel Island, and Reykata Bay. No Contacts made.

13 January 1943

Ship #442, Capt. Hensley Searched out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #413, Capt. Sorensen. Searched out of Cactus. Flew over the left side of Bouganville, Shortland and Tonolei Harbors and back over Russell Islands. Contacts: 16 enemy vessels, and numerous flying boats. No interception or AA of any description.

14 January 1943

Ship #442, Capt. Steedman. Out 400 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #413, Capt. Sorensen. Flew over the Japanese lines at Guadalcanal and dropped about 6 tons of supplies to American troops. Made three different trips and on each was fired upon by Japanese troops from the ground. No damage to plane or personnel. Landed Cactus.

15 January 1943

Ship #213, Capt. Puerta Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

Ship #413, Capt. Sorensen Cactus to Buttons

16 January 1943

Ship #213, Capt. Hall. Searched. Out 800 mi. Cont: None.

17 January 1943

NO MISSIONS TODAY

18 January 1943

Ship #213, Capt. Hensley Searched Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

19 January 1943

Ship #442, Capt. Puerta Buttons to Cactus

20 January 1943

Ship #442, Capt. Puerta search out of Cactus. Took pictures of Wickam and Viru Harbors. Seen 10 vessels in the Tonolei, Buin, and Shortland area. Float Zeros taking off from Shortland as we left on three engines. No AA at all.

Ship #413, Capt. Steedman Buttons to Cactus

Ship #211, Capt. Sowers Searched Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

21 January 1943

Ship #442, Capt. Puerta search out of Cactus. Lost engine over Buka. Contacted 4 AK's, 1DD, 50 miles out of Tonolei. No AA, or interception.

Ship #213, Capt. Steedman. Search out of Cactus. Encountered five ship and one fighter, all enemy. No action.

22 January 1943

Ship # 442, Capt. Puerta search out of Cactus. Searched Shortland area. Shot at by four Zeros, no hits or injuries. 1 DD off Shortland, two Cargo Ships, 1DD and 1 PT 20 miles off Shortland. Took pictures of Munda and was fired upon by AA, no hits.

Returned to Cactus

Ship #156, Capt. Sorensen Searched 800 Mi. Cont: None

23 January 1943

Ship #442, Capt. Puerta Cactus to Buttons – Ship #215, Capt. Steedman bombed Munda Pt. All bombs in target area. No AA.

24 January 1943

Ship #520, Capt. Hall Searched Out 800 mi. Cont: Own task Force.

Ship #457, Capt. Hensley Searched Out 800 Mi. Cont: Own task Force.

Ship #213, Capt. Steedman. Bombed Munda Pt. singularly, all bombs dropped in the target area. No AA or interception. Returned to Cactus

25 January 1943

NO TACTICAL MISSIONS THIS DATE.

26 January 1943

Ship #213, Capt. Steedman. Took off from Cactus on a striking mission and returned to Base because of weather conditions.

27 January 1943

Ship #415, Capt. Hall

Ship #156, Capt. Hensley

Ship #054, Capt. Sowers. The above three ships all went out on a Special Search Mission. The mission being to try to locate Ship #403 which was forced down at sea. No contacts or planes sighted by any of the above.

28 January 1943

NO TACTICAL MISSIONS THIS DATE.

29 January 1943

Ship #151, Capt. Hall. Buttons to Cactus

Ship #415, Capt. Sowers Buttons to Cactus

Ship #442, Capt. Hensley Special Search for Ship #403 . No planes sighted.

Ship #054, Capt. Houx. Search Out 800 Mi. Cont: None

30 January 1943

Ship #213, Capt. Steedman Cactus to Buttons

Ship #442, Capt. Hensley Buttons to Cactus

31 January 1943

Ship #122, Capt. Houx Buttons to Cactus

1 February 1943

The following three crews went on a bombing mission and failed to return.

Captain's Hall, Hensley, Houx.

Captain Sowers and crew flew a photo mission over Rekata Bay.

2 February 1943

Captain Sowers and Crew flew a photo mission over Rekata Bay.

3 February 1943

Captain Sowers and Crew flew a photo mission over Rekata Bay and Russell Island.

4 February 1943

Captain Sowers and Crew took off from Cactus at 0200 with 20-100 lb. bombs.

The bombs were dropped on Kahili Airfield. No AA, but a great many searchlights. Hits not observed.

5 February 1943

NO MISSIONS TODAY

6 February 1943

Captain Sowers and Crew flew an 800 mile search out of Cactus. Sectors 04° to 013°. No Contacts made.

7 February 1943

Captain Sowers and Crew returned to Buttons.

Undated sheet: This marks the end of activities for the original nine crews that left Oahu, Hawaii on 18 July 1942. On the [illegible date-hole punched] of February 1943 orders were received relieving all combat personnel of this organization from assigned. FINIS. [Other AAF documents note this order as dated 7 February 1943.]

FLYING OFFICERS

Commanding Officer:

Major Manierre, Ernest R. 0-23367

(Captains)

Eberenz, Richard J. 0386381

Hall, Earl O. 0325099

Messerschmitt, Kermit D. 0-330690

Puerta, Frank D. 0-401051

Richards, Robert H. 0-305202

Stone, Rolle E. Jr. 0-383747

Wuertele, Carl N. 0-388901

(1st Lieutenants)

Alley, Bert A. 0-430072
Castro, Joaquin. 0-428914
Eminger, Leo M. 0-388557
Gaskell, Robert C. 0-436864
Hensley, Harold P. 0-413623
Hyland, Donald M. 0-413597
McGhee, Robert H. 0-439441
Norton, Charles E. 0-416333
Sage, Hubert P. 0-426962
Sprawls, Philip C. 0-416915
Soensen, Glenn W. 0-416908
Sowers, Louis M. 0-4146910
Toler, Richard G. 0-416929

May 20, 1943 marked the beginning operations for the 42nd after replacements were made for the original men who went down under July 18, 1942 and ceased operations February 7, 1943.

[END TRANSCRIPT. MISSION RECORDS CONTINUE IN THE DOCUMENT]