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1 Oct-15 Dec 1943
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*History of the
18th Fighter Group
October - 1943*

(Det. "B")

P.R.C.

(Det. "B")

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MICROFILMED



SCANNED BY ACD
2004

GP-18-41
11 OCT 1943

314.7

1st Ind.

RU/jrm

(Hlat record)

HQ 18TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF, APO 709, 4 January 1944.

TO: Commanding General, XIII Fighter Command, APO 709.

Approved.

For the Commanding Officer:

R. Underwood
R. UNDERWOOD,
Capt., AC,
Adjutant.

314.7

2nd Ind.

CEA/rms

HEADQUARTERS, XIII FIGHTER COMMAND, APO 709, 5 January 1944.

TO: Commanding General, Thirteenth Air Force, APO 719.

For the Commanding Officer:

C. E. A.
C. E. A.

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A.C.

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[REDACTED]

DETACHMENT 'B' NIGHT FIGHTER SQUADRON
18th Fighter Group, AAF.
APO 709

15 December 1943.

SUBJECT: Historical Record of Organization.

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

1. In compliance with A.R. 345-105, dated 18 November 1929, as amended by Changes 1 and 3, the following Historical Record of this organization, is submitted for the period 1 October 1943 to 15 December 1943.

a. Organization:

- (1) Designation: Detachment 'B' Night Fighter Squadron, 13th Air Force.
- (2) Location: Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands.

b. Changes in Organization: Redesignated Detachment 'B' Night Fighter Squadron from 6th Night Fighter Squadron (Det), and assigned to the 13th Air Force per War Department Radiogram, A.G. 322, dated 16 September 1943.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted:

- (1) 1 October 1943: 17 Officers, 3 Flight Officers and 94 enlisted men.
- (2) 15 October 1943: 1 enlisted man joined organization from 12th Fighter Squadron.
- (3) 20 October 1943: 1 Officer transferred to 18th Fighter Group.
- (4) 22 October 1943: 10 enlisted men joined organization from 6th Replacement Depot.
- (5) 31 October 1943: 16 Officers, 3 Flight Officers and 105 enlisted men.
- (6) 17 November 1943: 4 Officers assigned from 12th Fighter Squadron.
- (7) 21 November 1943: 1 Officer transferred to the 419th Night Fighter Squadron
- (8) 27 November 1943: 1 Officer transferred to the 70th Fighter Squadron, APO 717.

(Historical Record of Organization, cont'd).

- (9) 28 November 1943: 2 Officers transferred to 419th Night Fighter Squadron, A.P.O. 709.
- (10) 30 November 1943: 16 Officers, 3 Flight Officers and 105 enlisted men.
- (11) 3 December 1943: 2 Officers transferred to the 419th Night Fighter Squadron.
- (12) 5 December 1943: 2 enlisted men transferred to 12th Fighter Squadron.
- (13) 9 December 1943: 1 enlisted man assigned from 347th Fighter Group, APO 502, D.S. enroute to join.
9 enlisted men assigned from 339th Fighter Squadron, APO 502, D.S. enroute to join.
11 enlisted men assigned from 67th Fighter Squadron, D.S. enroute to join.
- (14) 11 December 1943: 1 enlisted man assigned and joined from Hq. and Hq. Squadron, 13th Fighter Command, APO 709.
13 enlisted men transferred from 68th Fighter Squadron, APO 913. D.S. enroute to join.
- (14) 12 December 1943: 1 Officer assigned and joined from 18th Fighter Group, APO 709.
1 Officer assigned and joined from 13th Fighter Command, APO 709.
1 Officer assigned from 68th Fighter Squadron, APO 913, D.S. enroute to join.
12 Officers and 3 Flight Officers transferred to 419th Night Fighter Squadron, APO 709.
15 enlisted men assigned from 70th Fighter Squadron APO 717, D.S. enroute to join.
1 enlisted man assigned and joined from 18th Fighter Group, APO 709.
10 enlisted man assigned and joined from 12th Fighter Squadron, APO 709.
9 enlisted man assigned from 44th Fighter Squadron APO 708, D.S. enroute to join.
87 enlisted men transferred to 419th Night Fighter Squadron, APO 709.
5 enlisted men transferred to 347th Fighter Group, APO 502.
3 enlisted men transferred to 12th Fighter Squadron, APO 709.
1 enlisted man transferred to 44th Fighter Squadron, APO 708.
2 enlisted men transferred to 70th Fighter Squadron, APO 717.
- (15) 13 December 1943: 1 enlisted man transferred to 70th Fighter Squadron, APO 717.
- (16) 15 December 1943: Detachment 'B' Night Fighter Squadron, disbanded and 10 Officers and 77 enlisted men absorbed by 419th Night Fighter Squadron, APO 709

(Historical Record of Organization, cont'd).

d. Stations (permanent or temporary) of unit or parts thereof.

- (1) Arrived at APO 709 from APO 959, 28 February 1943.

e. Marches and Voyages:

- (1) 1 October 1943: 5 enlisted men departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
1 Officer departed APO 709 to DS APO 502.
- (2) 6 October 1943: 4 Officers departed APO 709 to DS APO 502.
- (3) 12 October 1943: 1 Officer departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (4) 14 October 1943: 1 Officer departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (5) 7 November 1943: 1 Officer and 1 Flight Officer departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (6) 8 November 1943: 4 enlisted men departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (7) 24 November 1943: 1 Officer departed APO 709 to TD APO 717.
- (8) 26 November 1943: 4 Officers departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.
- (9) 27 November 1943: 1 enlisted man departed APO 709 to DS APO 502.
- (10) 29 November 1943: 2 enlisted men departed APO 709 to DS APO 502.
- (11) 10 December 1943: 1 Officer departed APO 709 to DS APO 715.

f. Campaigns:

- (1) Name of: Northern Solomons Campaign.

From 28 February 1943 to present, the pilots and enlisted men of this organization participated in the campaign of the Northern Solomon Islands. The superiority of their training was amply demonstrated during this campaign.

- (2) Duration:

From 28 February 1943 to date in combat crew rotation, 10 weeks in the Solomon Islands, 9 days rest leave in Auckland, New Zealand, after which they return to this base for continued operations.

- (3) Authority ordering:

All pilots and crews ordered into action per Radiogram, Commanding General Thirteenth Fighter Command.

g. Battles:

- (1) (a) During the periods of operations in the Solomon Islands from 28 February 1943, the pilots and crews have stood ground and air alerts over Guadalcanal, Russellis and New Georgia. Towards the end of October 1943, intruder missions and night strafing missions were begun over Bougainville.
- (b) Pilots have on several instances intercepted Jap night raiders and either shot them down or prevented them from making their runs over their targets. Planes, supply dumps and barges have been destroyed during the night intruder missions on Bougainville.

(Historical Record of Organization, cont'd).

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

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Pilot	Type	Date	Type	Date
Capt. Barker			1 MB (Betty)	Aug. 13/43
Capt. Bennett	1 MB (Sally)	Apr. 19/43		
Capt. Harrell	1 MB (Betty)	Jul. 17/43		
	1 MB (Betty)	Aug. 14/43		
Capt. Tuttle	1 MB (Betty)	Jul. 12/43		
Lt. Meigs	1 MB (Betty)	Aug. 15/43		
	2 MB (Betty)	Sep. 21/43		
Lt. Van Bibber	1 Zero (Hap)	Jun. 16/43		
	1 Zero (Hap)	Nov. 6/43		

H. Commanding Officers during Northern Solomon Campaign from 28 February 1943 to date:

Major Sidney F. Wharton, 28 Feb. 1943 to 15 July 1943.
 Captain Ralph F. Jones, 15 July 1943 to 26 September 1943.
 Captain Emerson Y. Barker, 26 September 1943 to 9 October 1943.
 Captain Ralph F. Jones, 9 October 1943 to 21 November 1943.
 Captain Emerson Y. Barker, 21 November 1943 to 28 Nov. 1943.
 Captain Earl C. Bennett, 28 November 1943 to 15 Dec. 1943.

i. Losses in action:

Officers and enlisted men: None in period from 1 October 1943 to 15 December 1943.

i. Awards and Decorations:

Major Sidney F. Wharton Jr., was awarded the Air Medal on 5 August 1943.
 Captain Milton C. Hillebrand, was awarded the Air Medal on 5 August 1943.
 Captain Earl C. Bennett, was awarded the Air Medal on 5 August 1943.
 Captain Ralph F. Sugnet, was awarded the Air Medal on 5 August 1943.
 Captain Ralph F. Tuttle, was awarded the Air Medal on 5 August 1943 and Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal on 4 October 1943.
 Lt. Jack Bradner, was awarded the Air Medal on 10 December 1943 and Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal on 10 December 1943.
 Lt. Henry Meigs II, was awarded the Silver Star on 23 August 1943.
 T/Sgt. Raymond A. Mooney, was awarded the Air Medal on 5 August 1943.
 Sgt. Curtis R. Ehlert, was awarded the Air Medal on 5 August 1943.

(Historical Record of Organization cont'd).

Sgt. Emil M. Stajcer, was awarded the Air Medal on
5 August 1943.

Sgt. Edwin E. Tomlinson, was awarded the Air Medal on
5 August 1943.

k. Miscellaneous:

- (1) Detachment 'B' Night Fighter Squadron introduced intrusion fighting in this area. Raids have been made in bomb-carrying P-38's and P-7's upon the airfields, bivouac areas and barges on the Island of Bougainville. Enemy planes have been destroyed on the ground, ack-ack guns have been silenced and one barge has been blown up.
- (2) During the landing operations on Bougainville on 1 November 1943, planes of Detachment 'B' Night Fighter Squadron supplied night cover over the Task Force and landing barges.
- (3) Detachment 'B' Night Fighter Squadron has been disbanded as of 2400 15 December 1943 and the personnel and equipment have been absorbed by the newly arrived 419th Night Fighter Squadron.
- (4) Detachment 'B' originally, the 6th Night Fighter Squadron (Det) has earned the reputation as one of the best AAF units in this area. The pilots have earned the gratitude of the soldiers in the Solomon Islands who have been able to sleep more soundly due to the support of the night fighters. Much credit for the success of the Detachment's operations go to the enlisted men of the unit, who, by their ingenuity and inventiveness, in spite of the shortage of tools and equipment managed to keep the planes in excellent condition. To these men, the pilots and the enlisted men of Detachment 'B' Night Fighter Squadron, go the heartfelt 'Thanks' of the warriors of the Solomon Islands for those "Japless" nights.

Earl C. Bennett

EARL C. BENNETT,
Captain, AAF,
Commanding.

COMGENSOPAC ADVANCED

MPH/wdy

APO #709

16 December 1943.

SUBJECT: COMMENDATION.

TO : The Thirteenth Air Force.

1. From 25 July 1943, to 20 November 1943, Major General Nathan Twining, by direction of Comsopac and pursuant to the air employment directives and policies of Comairsopac, commanded the Allied Air Forces Solomons, Brigadier General Dean C. Strother, served as Fighter Commander, while Brigadier General William A. Mathony (then Colonel) was Bomber Commander.

2. During this period, immeasurable damage was done to the enemy. His ships and barges were destroyed, all of the New Georgia Group was overrun by our forces, Treasury was captured, and Bougainville was invaded the Jap was subjected to heavy loss of aircraft and personnel, and his Bougainville airdromes were made untenable. As a result we have materially improved our position for further assaults on the enemy, and we have acquired important naval facilities and many fine additional airdromes. A great share of the credit for these victories goes to the Air Arm; to the airmen of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Royal New Zealand Air Force, both shore and carrier based.

3. In all this the 13th Air Force, its Fighter Command, Bomber Command, Service Command, and all the officers and men of flight and ground echelons have had a major role. Your contribution for the success of the campaigns of the Armed Forces is inspiring to all. Your courage, your spirit of high endeavor, your patient endurance of discomforts, hardships and dangers your cheerfulness thru all and your will to win are a source of pride to all who are concerned with the destruction of Japanese Forces, the annihilation of his military power and the imposition of swift retribution on his military leaders, his government and subjects.

4. The 13th Air Force will continue to carry the fight until the Jap is completely crushed, and made to pay many times over for the crimes he has committed against our airmen, soldiers, sailors, and marines, and for the bestial deceit and brutality of Pearl Harbor, the Philippines, China and Malaya.

5. The 13th Air Force, born on the 13th of January, 1943, is now almost a year old--and what a year! Many of you men of this force have been carrying on in this area since before our attacks and capture of Guadalcanal and Tulagi. You have worked and sweated through the mud and heat, the malaria, the dangers and hardships of the early days at Efate, Espiritu Santo and Guadalcanal. You wondered then if our meager force could really stop the Jap. But soon this doubt changed to confidence as the gathering power and momentum of our forces increased, and then you helped to break forever the myth of Jap invincibility and to blast him out of Guadalcanal, the Russells, Munda and all of New Georgia Group, and now Treasury and Bougainville. You have seen him defeated in the air, on the ground and on the sea. The issue is no longer in doubt.

To: The Thirteenth Air Force, 16 December 1943.

6. Our people at home take pride in your accomplishments and sacrifices, glory in your victories and reverence the memory of your comrades who will not go home.

7. God bless you for your achievements and grant each of you the fortitude to carry on to complete victory. Keep healthy, keep smiling and keep fighting.

/s/ M. F. Harmon
/t/ M. F. HARMON
Lieutenant General
U. S. Army

AG 201.22 1st Ind. CG/RLO/jdd
HEADQUARTERS THIRTEENTH AIR FORCE, APO #719, 22 December 1943.

To: Commanding Officers, All Units, Thirteenth Air Force.

1. It is with considerable gratification and pride that I forward the above commendation from the Commanding General, United States Army Forces in the South Pacific Area, to every member of the Thirteenth Air Force.

2. General Harmon's splendid tribute will be read to every member of this air force at the first formation after receipt of this letter.

3. A copy of this commendation will be made a part of the historical records of each organization.

/s/ Ray L. Owens,
/t/ RAY L. OWENS,
Brigadier General, U.S. Army,
Commanding.

AG 201.22 2nd Lt. CG/EWB/jfb
HEADQUARTERS XIII FIGHTER COMMAND, APO 709, 27 December 1943.

To: Commanding Officers, All Units, XIII Fighter Command.

1. With a deep sense of appreciation for the exemplary and untiring efforts of all officers and men of the XIII Fighter Command, I take pleasure in forwarding the foregoing commendation from the Commanding General USAF in the South Pacific Area, together with the indorsement of the Commanding General, Thirteenth Army Air Force.

2. Needless to say, each of you has played an important part in the successful campaigns to which the Commanding General has so proudly referred.

3. Paragraph 3, preceding indorsement, will be complied with.

/s/ E. W. Barnes,
/t/ E. W. BARNES,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

*A True Copy
Warren Jacobs
1st Lt. A.C.*