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JUNE 1947

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HEADQUARTERS
SEVENTH AIR FORCE

DESIGNATION SHEET

(Official designation, including number, of
unit and of each echelon in chain of command)

AIR FORCE: SEVENTH

COMMAND: VII Fighter

WING:

GROUP:

SQUADRON: 6th Night Fighter

AREA:

BATTALION:

CENTER:

COMPANY:

DEPOT:

DETACHMENT:

DISTRICT:

DIVISION:

PLATOON:

REGIMENT:

REGION:

SCHOOL:

SECTION:

UNIT:

ETC.:

Has Security Classification of material been
checked? ☒

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~~SECRET~~HISTORICAL SECTION
SEVENTH AIR FORCEOrganizational History, 6th Night Fighter Squadron,
VII Fighter Command, Seventh Air Force.

1 June 1944 - 30 June 1944.

1. Organization:

On 6 June 1944, the 6th Fighter Squadron was relieved from assignment to 15th Fighter Group, and attached to VII Fighter Command.

2. Strength:

27 Officers

161 Enlisted men at John Rodgers, Oahu, T.H. - (2 attached from 17th Base HQS & A.B. Sqdn. APO #953.

13 Officers

94 Enlisted men at Secret Destination on detached service. *Saipan*3. Date of arrival and departure from each station occupied in this theatre:

11 June 1944 under verbal order, Squadron station Mokuleia Airfield, Oahu, T.H. 21 June 1944 Squadron reassigned to John Rodgers Naval Air Station.

6 June 1944 detachment of 16 Officers and 53 Enlisted Men left for Secret Destination.

4. Losses:

On 25 June 1944, two P-61's operating at Saipan Airstrip collided upon landing. Both planes exploded on contact, killing pilots 2nd Lt. W.C. Francis and 2nd Lt. C.V. Duvall, and Radio Observers 2nd Lt. P.B. Henderson and F/O P.C. Nearn. This was confirmed by Mr. Daniel Collins, Northrup factory representative, who was on Saipan with the detachment at the time the accident took place.

5. Awards and Decorations:

None.

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History of the 6th Night Fighter Squadron.

On June 6th the squadron was relieved from assignment to the 15th Fighter Group, and attached to VII Fighter Command.

On June 6th a second detachment left the squadron for a secret destination. Maj. Victor M. Mahr led the detachment of 7 pilots, 7 radar observes, 2 ground Officers and 6 enlisted men (including 2 aerial gunners). The seven P-61's were flown by the detachment.

On 11 June 1944, the squadron was ordered to Mokuleia Airfield. Movement was made by plane and truck within 24 hours, and the alert flight was ready there that night. On 21 June 1944, the procedure was reversed when, again on verbal orders, we were returned to our previous area at John Rodgers Naval Air Base.

On June 12th the 9th Radar Calibration Detachment, AAF, composed of 8 Officers and 26 enlisted men was attached to our squadron for rations only.

The June 25th Daily Intelligence Summary reported the loss of 2 P-61's and pilots, at Saipan. No further word was received until Mr. Daniel Collins, Northrup factory representative returned from Saipan. He reports Pilots 2nd Lt. W.C. Francis, 2nd Lt. C.V. Duvall, and Radar Observers 2nd Lt. P.B. Henderson and F/O P.C. Nearn were instantly killed when Lt. Duvall landed his P-61 too "hot" and ran into Lt. Francis' P-61 which had landed before him. Both planes exploded.

Persuant to instructions contained in General Orders No. 148 of the Central Pacific Area, dated 17 May 1944, our squadron was reorganized to be of strength as follows: 49 Officers and 242 Enlisted men. There is included also a new classification of Combat Crews composed of 32 Officers and 16 Enlisted men.

The squadron has been allowed an increase of 16 ratings for Armorer-Gunners to be as follows: 4 Tech. Sgts. and 12 Staff Sgts. Also an addition of four power-turret gunsight specialists to be rated as follows: 1 Tech. Sgt., 1 Staff Sgt. and two Sgts. All the above mentioned vacancies to be filled from our own personnel. Also we have been allowed an increase of airplanes from twelve to sixteen, of which the additional will be the new P-61 Night Fighters ("Black Widow") built by Northrup. Ours is the first squadron to train Air and Ground crews in preparation to their immediate entry into combat with the above mentioned air craft.

~~SECRET~~Operations:

The month of June saw much bustling and moving on the part of all sections of the Squadron. On 11 June 1944, the Squadron was surprised with a move to Mokuleia and dear old Mother Nature. Gone were the sumptuous dinners in Honolulu which were such a treat to the majority of the ~~EM~~-----not to mention how easily accessible were the trips and 'phone calls made by the officers to their "little bundles of Heaven". However before long the Squadron turned native and swimming, spear-fishing and planned wild boar hunting trips were quite the order of the day. On 21 June 1944, lo and behold, orders were issued to pack up and return to John Rodgers and civilization. It was with no little reluctance that the Squadron left the rugged terrain where once pranced Hawaii's mighty warriors. Both moves were completed in record time and the Squadron should be commended on the splendid cooperation displayed by all.

The Officers and enlisted men who were waiting further orders for transfer to a secret destination left the early part of this month, with the exception of Lt. Thomas and his Observer, Lt. Acre. The airplane to which they had been assigned fatally crashed while being tested by Air Depot personnel. Among those who left were Sgt. Woodrow Fanizzi and Cpl. Joseph Lomurro, both veteran operations clerks. Squadron athletes will keenly feel the absence of Cpl. Lomurro who starred in everything from Ping-Pong to Basketball. This section joins the other sections of the Squadron in wishing the 6th Night Fighter detachment God speed and are confident they will highly distinguish themselves in the land down under.

The section staff was reinforced by the addition of two new men this month. One was Sgt. (then Cpl.) W.D. Hartley, formerly of the Communication section, and the other was Sgt. J.H. Speer, late of the 21st Group S-3. Both men were welcomed with open arms.

Promotions this month were received by Sgt. "D. Hartley and Cpl. H.A. Newman. Both were well earned and the section is now expectantly awaiting cigars.

On 14 June, 1944, the 9th Radar Calibration Det. was attached to this Squadron. They have 23 flying personnel and two B-24 J type aircraft. This section is handling the administrative end of their flying training and consequently when reports must be made, operations is a veritable beehive of activity. Martyrs that we are-----we feel that we shall all be rewarded in the Other World, however, in the interim, our patience becomes a bit taxed-----and so does Capt. Milholland's wrist, what with the signing of all the additional paper work.

The joint Army-Navy Manoeuvres took place on 27 June 1944 and were highly successful from the Squadron point of view. We were very pleased to find that Lt. Baer, one of our Assistant Operations Officers finally got in his lick at the enemy (simulated). It seems he shot down (simulated) fifteen or sixteen of them-----so look out, Tojo!

The topic of morale is still a subject not openly discussed by the

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majority of the men. From all indications it seems that the Ping-Pong and Pool tables in the Day Room will hardly replace our faded dreams of furloughs after two years overseas. Our move to John Rodgers should help some, because it is at least possible to get off the Post and forget it all by becoming paralyzed with a few drinks of Island Gin. It is also encouraging to have a Squadron Commander who is doing his utmost to make sweating this war out a little easier.

The end of the month found the Squadron with 4,99:00 logged and a wide array of training missions, which is an enviable record what with our two moves, inclement weather and lack of airplanes.

Engineering:

Engineering's erratic month, swept through with the Squadron's fiasco movement to Mokuleia and then back to John Rodgers. Quite accustomed to the well known characteristics of Army procedures the 6th Sq. personnel were not too greatly perturbed. The debacle of moving did not go without its compensating factor however, for the cobwebs of non-essential accumulated equipment and material were eliminated and the consequent knowledge, experience and efficiency derived may prove its value at a not too far away date.

The technical activity of this section is still more or less shrouded with anticipation for the expected P-61's. Preparations for their arrival have been initiated; the men are familiarizing themselves with pertinent directives; requisitions have been submitted for necessary equipment and a list for additional personnel to crew the ships has also been submitted.

One of the more highlighting event of the month was the definite breach of the Technical Inspection Department from the Engineering Section to which it has been closely allied in the past. The Squadron Inspector however, is still assigned categorically under Engineering. Although a lliance of these two departments was never necessarily authorized by squadron organizational policy (save for the fact that the constant technical advice offered by the Inspectors incited this close cooperation), the recommendation of Colonel G.A. Whatley, VII Air Force Field Inspector in his report of this squadron, prompted the separation.

It was this higher echelon's contention that a "competent NCO be appointed Technical Inspector and that this NCO together with any assistants necessary, be responsible directly to the Commanding Officer, since the few officers in a fighter squadron with sufficient technical knowledge for inspection are flying Officers, and the principle duties of these Officers is of such importance as to leave insufficient time for inspection duties."

The attitude existing between the present Technical Inspector and the line personnel falls into a very delicate category. Whether this "abrasion" is created merely by "habitual hatred" for all inspectors or whether it is aroused by negligence of the inspector regarding his "conduct" (as outlined in Section V, Technical Order 00-15-1) remains to be seen.

The ratings allotted Engineering provided on of the biggest up-lifts in morale that this section has experienced in a long time. A good portion of the Cpls. and Sgts. ratings were given to Engineering personnel, but that is easily justified when viewed with the fact that one third of this section consisted of Pvs. The efforts employed by the Commanding Officer and the Line Chief making these ratings possible are greatly appreciated.

M/Sgt. John Trubilla is waiting the results of his appearance before an Officer's qualification board in regards to a "spot Commission" appointment. It is the wish and desire of everyone to see him appointed.

Our former Line Chief, M/Sgt. N.J. Brooks, has gone down under on a mission of war on an Aircraft Carrier to deliver some Army Fighter Aircraft to a theatre of Operations. Pvt. Raoul M. Morales has been transferred from the Engineering Dept. to the S-2 Department.

Armament:

On June 6th the remaining detachment of men leaving for an unknown destination left this section.

Meetings were held twice a week during the month and members of the section conducted lectures on various phases of armament and ordnance. These included Rockets, P-61 armament installations and aerial torpedoes. Training films on aerial torpedoes were secured from the Navy and shown during the lecture.

This section began to move to our new base, Mokuleia, on June 8th and were completely set up on June 9th. At all times during the squadron movement this section was on an operating basis and work was completed swiftly and efficiently.

Tennis courts were available at Mokuleia and the men in this section played a great deal. A series of tournament matches were being drafted for competitive playing to include armament and ordnance personnel. Many of the men in this section have taken advantage of the special service Officers facilities offered in trips to Hilo and to baseball games.

On June 16th Sgt. Walko and Sgt. Collins were assigned to this section having been transferred from another squadron.

On June 18th this section was again on the move, this time to return to our former base at A.P.O. 953.

Radar:

There is only one word that will explain this past month and that is "Snafu". What started out as a seemingly peaceful month with nothing but two P-70's to maintain as Radar training ships ended up in a succession of movings.

The first few days of the month saw our planes off to the combat zone together with most of our men. The five enlisted men left had become resigned to their fate of staying on the island indefinitely and really looked forward to a rather quiet period during which they would be able to catch up on the passes that they had missed out on when they were preparing the P-61's for their initiation to combat duty.

Robert Burns once said "the best laid plans of mice and men gang oft aglew" and that certainly held true this month. We had been authorized 2 and 4 day passes to Hilo, Hawaii and a few of the men had already signed up for them but the day before they were supposed to leave the C.O. told us that we would have to move. He did his best to keep us from moving but the "powers that be" said move, so we moved.

In spite of all the gripes about the trip up, the boys really liked it before we had been there very long. We had a beautiful setup in the Radar shop and it represented a lot of work on the part of the few men that we do have in the section. When we got there we didn't even have a shack on the line to move into, so we had to hunt around until we did find an empty one and move it to the line. We have to carry our own tent along to use as a secondary shop and as an office.

We had just got the shop completely set up and to a point where we could concentrate more on our line work and studying, when without any warning, no not even a rumor, we were told that we would have to move back to John Rodgers. It sort of hit us between the eyes but after we recovered normalcy we pitched in and started all over again. We established some sort of record because we dismantled the shop and tnet and had everything packed and ready to go in 5 hours.

We're back at John Rodgers again and still sweating out our new aircraft. We have 9 new men at school that are due back to the Sqd'n some time next week and then we will be all set to take care of anything they want to send us.

As far as our equipment goes, the month was spent experimenting with new tuning techniques and modifications in order to facilitate our work when the planes do finally arrive at the squadron.

Communications:

The following communication historical report is submitted for your information for the period 1 June 1944 to 30 June 1944, inclusive:

Total strength 927 enlisted men, 1 Officer. S/sgt. Shaker was transferred to our department from the 73rd. Fighter Squadron.

Twenty days (20) of the month was spent in the process of moving twice and setting up. Ten days were spent at Mokuleia Air Field, and about the time the section was set up for normal operation, orders were given to return to John Rodgers airport.

Linemen were kept very busy installing telephone lines; current (AC) for the various buildings; installing switchboard communication within the squadron

Radio men were kept very busy setting up test benches; ground stations; changing squadron frequencies on all radio sets in squadron; and normal work.

Teletype and switchboard operators were kept busy setting up and resuming normal conditions.

Two men detailed for one week kitchen police; one man detailed for one week sanitation engineer. Regular night duty resumed normal.

Communication Officer and section chief were busy trying to get things moved from Mokuleia and then trying to get set up at John Rodgers as soon as possible.

Promotions effective 27 June 1944 in the communication section were as follows: Stanley A. Wilk promoted from Corporal to sergeant; Mike Rodriguez promoted from corporal to sergeant; Steve a Gavorchik promoted from Private first class to corporal.

Moral 90 Per cent low, 10 percent high, due to ratings.

Ordnance Section:

Following is a list of activities, Ordnance Section, this Squadron, for the month of June, 1944.

Detachment going down under left this squadron on the 6 June, 1944. Five (5) Ordnance men and fourteen (14) Armament men were included.

All armorers in both Ordnance and Armament sections worked one day in the ammunition shack. They aided in handling, painting and storage of all types of ammunition used by this squadron. This enabled every man in this section to become thoroughly familiar with the various types of ammunition being used.

A colored drawing has been made of Fuze, P.D., M4 for Rocket, H.E., 4.5", M8. This is a simplified blown up drawing and has been used in this squadron for instructional purposes. Data and information for the drawing was taken from the Ordnance Officer. Photostatic copies will be submitted for distribution.

This squadron has been busy moving the past month. Armament and Ordnance sections were ready to operate at all times during these moves. Shop was set up expertly in a minimum of time.

As mentioned in previous reports, all men in Ordnance and Armament sections are being familiarized with all types of Ordnance Material used in airplanes. Next lecture to be held on Monday, 26 June, 1944. The subject; Aerial Torpedo, MK 13. All current data and training films have been secured on loan, from the Naval Torpedo Officer, Ford Island.

Medical Personnel:

There were no changes in Officers or Enlisted men assigned to this Section.

Cpl. Jack B. Offenstien, hospitalized as of 26 May 1944, returned to duty as of 22 June 1944.

Hospitalizations:

Sgt. Andrew J. Zahoryin admitted to 147th General Hospital as of 25

May 1944 from the 333d Fighter Squadron. Transferred to this Squadron as of 17 June 1944. Still hospitalized.

Pvt. Louis J. Basilotta admitted to Tripler General Hospital as of 22 June 1944. Discharged from hospital as of 1 July 1944.

Cpl. Joseph D. Lydon admitted to Tripler General Hospital as of 27 June 1944. Cpl. Lydon underwent an appendectomy immediately upon admittance and is still hospitalized.

Immunizations:

Immunizations against smallpox, typhoid fever and tetanus were maintained at authorized levels for all Officers and Enlisted men of the Squadron.

Treatments:

There were 168 patients treated at the Dispensary.

There were 289 treatments given.

During the Squadron Nine (9) day stay at Mokuleia the Medical Section also treated personnel of the 9th Radar Calibration Detachment, 1026 Signal Detachment, 947 M.P. Company and the D.P.O.

Minor Surgery performed at the Dispensary included the removal of small cysts, tumors and warts.

Inspections:

Routine Physical inspections of all Enlisted men were held.

Supplies and Equipment:

An inventory of Medical Equipment, in the Dispensary, not authorized by the present T/O & E was submitted to the Commanding General of the Central Pacific Area, through channels, with the request that this equipment be authorized and with the statement that this equipment is necessary for the efficient treatment of the medical needs of the personnel of this Squadron. No action regarding this matter has yet been taken by the Commanding General of the C.P.A.

Other Activities such as sports and recreation:

Due to the unsettled conditions prevailing in the Squadron during this month there was little opportunity for the members of the Medical Section to participate in other activities.

The Morale of the Medical Section is generally good.

The Squadron's ten (10) months record of 100% freedom from venereal

disease was maintained.

There are no cases of Communicable disease in the Squadron.

On 8 June 1944, Cpl. Marquette and Cpl. Padois, from their ambulance station on the line observed two B-25 bombers collide in mid-air and crash land in the general direction of Honolulu. Captain Braham, with Cpl. Radomski as driver, drove in an ambulance to the scene of the crash of one of the bombers on Dillingham Road in Honolulu. They were able to be of service by transporting the body of an, at that time, unidentified member of the B-25 crew to the Army Morgue in Honolulu.

Parachute:

From June 3rd until July 3rd there has been a change in the personnel of this department. Pvt. Neel has been transferred to the Engineering Department. This leaves just two men in the section now.

There were two T.O.'s to replace some older ones. There wasn't any work to be done on these T.O.'s by this department. The change concerned only the Sub-Depot. With Major Alford's permission we went ahead and replaced smoke grenades and floating flashlights for sea markers and drinking water in the one-man type rafts. This however, was only done to the rafts belonging to those who especially wanted it. It stands now that 50% of the pilots and flight officers have this new set-up. The Commanding Officer left it to the discretion of each individual. We believe this is a good idea as it shows the interest some pilots have, while others are lacking.

We were exceptionally busy fitting parachutes to flying personnel leaving for down under during the previous month. Since Jungle Kits had to be added (it is required by T.O. 00-30-51 that all flying personnel have this equipment), 90% of the 'chutes had to be readjusted. All equipment was installed. Life rafts were inflated, inspected and tested. The parachutes themselves were all in good condition.

Intelligence:

Training of pilots proceeded as usual this month, with geographical studies as the main topic of lectures. Familiarization with Japanese held islands were as follows: Bonin Islands, Formosa, Philippines, Palau, Saipan, Yap, Nansei Shoto Islands.

A trip to the Bishop Museum by five officers was a high spot in a training guide, as was the showing of a new film entitled "Castaway".

S/Sgt. C.W. Zendler, who has been with the section since its founding over a year ago, was promoted to T/Sgt. and a new clerk, Pvt. R.A. Morales, joined the section on 28 June 1944, to aid in typing the many added reports required by the higher echelons.

Special Service:

Activities for this month were somewhat curtailed because of the squadron movement to Mokuleia and back to Honolulu Naval Air Station. However the 7th AAF vs Navy baseball game, starring Joe Dellaglio, Mc-

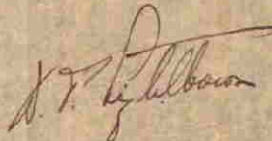
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Cormack, Dillinger, Friddy, and others, was attended by many of the squadron baseball devotees. This was the largest game ever to take place on the island and one that will long remain in the minds of those who attended. The score was 4 to 0 in favor of the 7th AAF in a 12 inning game thriller.

At the 19th Troop Carrier theater, the squadron attended an old fashioned but highly entertaining melodrama entitled "Love Rides the Rails", with the added "Oleo". Also on the monthly program at this fine theater was "Street Scene", and amusing variety show.

Several of the musical minded personnel attended the concerts of Yehudi Menuhin in Honolulu which provided a pleasant change in entertainment. It was noted that service personnel made up a large part of the audience with many notables present including Admiral Nimitz for the last concert.

Lt. Berg, athletic officer, took part in the Army- Navy CPA swimming championships in Honolulu with the 7th AAF swim team which made up most of the Army team. The meet was an excellent one with the team total of the Army winning out in the last relay race.


D.P. LIGHTBOWN,
1st Lt., A.C.,
Historical Officer.