

RESTRICTED

73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O. # 951

HISTORICAL SECTION
SEVENTH AIR FORCE

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

SUPPLEMENT NUMBER ONE

1 APRIL 1944 -- 30 APRIL 1944

P.R.C.

1. ORGANIZATION:

Negative.

2. STRENGTH:

Fifty-one (51) Officers.
Two hundred forty-nine (249) Enlisted Men.

3. DATE OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FROM EACH STATION OCCUPIED IN THIS THEATER:

Negative.

4. LOSSES:

Lieut. Robert Bermingham	---	Missing. 1 April.
Lieut. Milton A. Dupeuy	---	Missing. 14 April.
Lieut. Clarence W. Stearns	---	Killed in line of duty. 15 April.

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Negative.

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A.P.O. # 951ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORYSUPPLEMENT NUMBER ONE1 APRIL 1944 -- 30 APRIL 1944NARRATIVE

To this squadron, the month of April was notable for the inclusion of two extremes -- four separate and tragic events which served to dampen the spirits of all concerned, and intimations of very exciting news, which sent most spirits soaring. It also witnessed the appointment of a new commanding officer.

To dispense with the bad news first, there were four major aircraft accidents resulting in four pilot fatalities, three of these pilots being members of the Squadron and one a member of the 318th Fighter Group, AAF. Brief details on these accidents follow:

On 1 April, 2nd Lt. ROBERT J. BERMINGHAM was flying as Number 4 man in a four ship flight which was flying in a westerly direction through the clouds at about 3,000 feet over the Koolau Mountain Range. When the flight emerged from the clouds Lt. BERMINGHAM's plane was missing and was never seen again. Subsequent search over both land and sea failed to reveal any evidences of a crash and the loss will in all likelihood remain a mystery. He has been listed as "Missing".

On 3 April, Lt. Col. WILLIAM J. A. BOWEN, Executive Officer of the 318th Fighter Group, AAF, was flying one of the Squadron's P-47s on a solo mission when he developed what was believed to be oil pressure trouble (This theory is the result of his radio conversation prior to crashing) and attempted to make a forced landing at Kahuku Airfield. He lacked sufficient altitude to make the field and instead made a rough forced landing on the water just beyond. He was either thrown or jumped clear, was picked up by a crash boat in an unconscious condition and died fifteen minutes later.

On 14 April, 2nd Lt. MILTON A. DUPOUY, a pilot rather recently arrived from flying school and hence still inexperienced, was the wing man in an element take-off from the Bellows fighter-scramble strip. The flight was part of a Controller-directed scramble during a squadron alert period. As the element gained altitude out over the water, the leader started a slow climbing turn to the left. Lt. DUPOUY, however, evidently having experienced some trouble, started to turn to the right as though in some sort of trouble and indicating that he wished to re-

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turn to the field. He lacked sufficient altitude, his right wing dipped sharply and soon after he spun in -- about a mile or so off shore. Neither the plane or pilot were recovered.

On 15 April, 2nd Lt. CLARENCE W. STEARNS took off in his turn on an early morning flight which was for the purpose of night flying training. Although his plane seemed to be functioning well at least up to the moment of leaving the ground, for some inexplicable reason he failed to climb and crashed into the water only a couple of hundred yards off shore. His body was recovered.

Lt. STEARNS was buried with military honors at Schofield Barracks on 18 April. Memorial services for Lts. BIRMINGHAM and DUPOUY were held in the Squadron Area on 20 April. Memorial services had also been held on 9 April for Capt. ROBERT M. DUNN, who had been declared missing exactly one year previous.

On the first of the month Capt. JOHN J. HUSSEY JR. was transferred to the 318th Fighter Group in the capacity of Group Operations Officer. Capt. DE JACK WILLIAMS replaced him as Squadron Operations Officer. Then, on 15 April, a major transfer took place as Major JAMES M. MENG went to Group to serve as Operations Officer and Capt. HUSSEY returned to the Squadron to take over as Commanding Officer. The Squadron sincerely regretted the loss of Major MENG, who had been popular with both the officers and the men, and at the same time gladly accepted Capt. HUSSEY as his successor. The latter had been with the outfit since his arrival at Midway on 18 August 1942 and has always been extremely well liked and respected by the entire Squadron. (A brief biographical sketch of Capt. HUSSEY is appended.)

Officer promotions for the month (effective 6 April) were 1st Lts. GABRIEL E. SEMO and ALAN B. SINAUER to the rank of Captain, and 2nd Lt. JOHN S. MOFFATT to the rank of 1st Lt.

The Squadron added another "First-to-do-something" to its list when on 16 April Capt. D. J. WILLIAMS made the first Carrier take-off with a P-47 in at least this part of the Pacific. Flying from the deck of the U.S.S. Wasp, he was successfully catapulted in an experimental run of 100 feet. *July 1944*

The number of planes assigned to the Squadron was increased substantially during the month. On the first of the month we listed 28 P-47-Ds; on the last of the month there were 37. All during the month our planes were coming from and going to H.A.D. (Hawaiian Air Depot) for modifications; at first for wing tank installations, later for catapult hooks and rocket installations. Particularly in the beginning of this shuttle operation, the Squadron was dismayed with the carelessness (or worse) displayed by the H.A.D. workers; planes came back with an unbelievable collection of foreign matter, ranging from small nuts, bolts

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and clamps up to screw-drivers, pliers, inspection plates, etc., primarily inside the wings (where they endangered the aileron controls) and in other parts of the planes. Whereas none of the accidents can definitely be attributed to this condition, the Squadron and higher echelons naturally became greatly alarmed. Suffice it to say that thorough investigations were made and the proper steps taken.

In view of the fact that a large percentage of all planes were at H.A.D. at practically all times, and that toward the end of the month all planes on the field were being worked on (engine changes, sandpapering, paint jobs, etc.) the total Squadron flying time for the month was surprisingly high -- 958 hours and 15 minutes.

There was an unusual amount of turnover in pilot personnel. The following men departed on 13 April to join the 5th Air Force:

2nd Lt. G. P. REED
2nd Lt. B. H. REMER
2nd Lt. G. S. SAUM
2nd Lt. R. C. SATHER
2nd Lt. W. S. SHWAB

The following were transferred to other Squadrons on 13 April:

Capt. JARVIS BROWN	...	To the 531st Fighter Squadron
2nd Lt. P. E. SCHUER	...	" " " " "
2nd Lt. F. L. SEYMOUR	...	" " " " "
F/O J. R. WARDLAW	...	" " 72nd " "

The following pilots were added to the Roster:

2nd Lt. R. G. O'HARA	direct from the U.S.A.	on 8 April
2nd Lt. H. H. PAYNE	" " " "	" " "
2nd Lt. D. R. RILEY	" " " "	" " "
Capt. J. M. O'HARE	- from the 531st F. S.	" 13 April
2nd Lt. J. R. SNYDER	" " " "	" " "
2nd Lt. K. W. MATTISON	" " 72nd	" " "
F/O F. F. SABICK	" " 47th	" 24 "
2nd Lt. JOHN FURGE	" " " "	" 28 "

The first three of this group, although newly arrived in this department, all had about 100 hours of P-47 time back in the states, and were sent to Hickam Field for the two week Gunnery Course. Capt. O'HARE, an experienced pilot, had spent most of his time with the 78th Fighter Squadron, although he was once with the 73rd when the Squadron was out at Midway. He is now a flight leader with this Squadron. Of particular interest, too, is the acquisition of Lt. SNYDER, who comes in as the ranking 2nd

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Lieutenant. Lt. SNYDER was with the 72nd Fighter Squadron during their entire stay on Makin Atoll and becomes the first pilot now in this organization to have a Jap plane to his credit, having shot down a ZEKKE with his P-39 in aerial combat off Mille Atoll.

Squadron morale fluctuated wildly during the month, naturally reaching its lowest point during the time of the accidents. The lack of new information on a possible reassignment or furlough arrangement continued to have its undermining effects. However, the intersectional "Barfly" softball league, started late in March, proved to be even more of a success than anticipated. A game was played every evening after supper, so that with six teams in the league, each team played about twice weekly. The men have stated that this was the greatest "morale builder" (their own words) in a very long time. Not only did they turn out in large numbers every evening to watch and cheer (or razz), but it gave them something to talk and argue about in a friendly way during the day. We have been told that they actually worked more eagerly because there was something to look forward to at night. Batting averages were faithfully kept and posted daily; the competition has been keen and with every man on a squad, if not actually playing, the interest has been great. At the end of the month the "Lions", one of two engineering teams, were leading the league.

The Squadron had its regular movies three times a week, some good, some bad. On the evening of 26 April there was a meeting of all enlisted men in the Messhall prior to the evening movie, at which time the S-2 gave a short talk on Security and then introduced Lt. DOCK STONEHOCKER, currently S-2 with the 333rd Fighter Squadron. Lt. STONEHOCKER had been on Makin with the 72nd Fighter Squadron and had a splendid collection of photographs. These were projected onto a screen by use of a Delineascope, and Lt. STONEHOCKER gave a talk which was both instructive, amusing and at times stirring, for he did not neglect to touch upon fundamental issues.

Toward the end of the month it became apparent to all concerned that some sort of major Squadron move into combat was imminent. Preparations got under way and although the tempo of work was greatly increased, it may be said without any equivocation that the spirits of every man -- pilots, ground officers and enlisted men -- rose to new heights.

Attached are the following:

1. Squadron Orders for the month April, 1944.
2. Biographical sketch of Capt. HUSSEY, Commanding Officer.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF CAPT. JOHN J. HUSSEY, JR..

JOHN J. HUSSEY JR. was born on 31 May 1916 in Springfield, Mass. Soon after, his family moved to Sea Cliff (Long Island), N. Y., where he received all of his basic education, going through the local grade and high school. He then attended N. Y. State Agricultural School for two years.

During the next couple of years Capt. HUSSEY divided his time between practical farming in up-state N. Y. and traveling through South and Central America, where he frequently worked his passage for the opportunity of moving on to new and interesting countries.

He volunteered for the Air Corps early in the game and on 15 March 1941 he entered Primary Training School at Lakeland, Fla. He went through Basic at Augusta, Ga., and Advanced at Maxwell Field, Ala., receiving his wings and his commission as Second Lieutenant on 31 October 1941.

He was immediately assigned to overseas duty as a Pursuit Pilot and was sent to the Hawaiian Department, where he joined the 45th Pursuit Squadron. He was with them at Wheeler Field at the time of the Japanese attack on 7 December. On 18 August 1942 he was transferred to the 73rd Fighter Squadron, which was then stationed on Midway Island.

He has been with the Squadron ever since with the exception of one brief two week interval and has had a wealth of experience as Element Leader and Flight Leader, in addition to holding many ground assignments such as Engineering Officer and later Operations Officer. He was also Squadron Executive Officer.

On 1 April 1944 Capt. HUSSEY was transferred to the 318th Fighter Group in the capacity of Group Operations Officer (S-3). On 14 April he returned to the Squadron where he relieved Major JAMES M. MENG as Squadron Commander.

Capt. HUSSEY received his promotion to the rank of First Lieutenant on 7 August 1942, and to Captain on 1 February 1943.

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73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
APO #951

5 April 1944.

SQUADRON ORDERS)

NUMBER 9)

1. OOCO 1 April 1944: the following dy asgmts directed:

NAME	REID FR	DETAILED TO
CAPT DE JACK WILLIAMS, 0433765, AC	Flt Comdr "A" Flt (Prim dy)	Opns O (Prim dy)
CAPT WILLIAM M McGOWN, 0726798, AC	Flt Comdr "B" Flt (Add dy)	Flt Comdr "A" Flt (Add dy)
CAPT LEWIS A. NELSON, 0727526, AC	Flt Comdr "D" Flt (Prim dy)	Flt Comdr "B" Flt Prim dy
1ST LT ROBERT F TOUHEY, JR., 0447326, AC		Flt Comdr "D" Flt (Add dy)
1ST LT ALFRED I. FLYNN, 0730437, AC		Flt Comdr "C" Flt (Prim dy)
2ND LT JOHN W. CANTWELL, 0866683, AC	Pers Equip O (Prim dy) Asst S-3 & Weather O (Add dy) Asst Engr O (Add dy)	Asst Engr O (Prim dy)
1ST LT LEO W. EHLETT, 0577451, AC	Radio O (Prim dy)	Personal Equip O (Prim dy) Asst S-3 & Weather O (Adddy)
2D LT EARL H. HARBOUR, 0806672, AC		Element Ldr (Prim dy)
2D LT JOHN M. STEVENS, 0807640, AC		Element Ldr (Prim dy)
2D LT CHARLES J. FIETZ, JR., 0807278, AC		Element Ldr (Prim dy)
2D LT ROBERT L. SHEPARD, 0807629, AC		Element Ldr (Prim dy)
1ST LT ALAN B. SINAUER, 0570262, AC		Historical O (Add dy)

/s/ James M. Meng
/t/ JAMES M. MENG,
Major, Air Corps,
Commanding.

Dist: norm.

A TRUE COPY:

GABRIEL A. SEMO,
Captain, Air Corps.

73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
APO #951

SQUADRON ORDERS)

8 April 1944.

NUMBER 10)

1. OCCC 1 April 1944: The following dy asgmts directed:

NAME

2D LT CLARENCE W. STEARNS,
0686731, AC

DETAILED TO

Element Ldr (Prim dy)

/s/ James M Meng
/t/ JAMES M MENG
Major, Air Corps,
Commanding.

Dist: norm.

A TRUE COPY:


GABRIEL A. SEMO, Capt., AC.

73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
APO #951

SQUADRON ORDERS)

13 April 1944.

NUMBER 11)

1. OOCO 6 April 44: The following dy asgmts directed:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>FIELD FR</u>	<u>DETAILED TO</u>
CAPT JOHN M. O'HARE, 0727530, AC		Flt Comdr "D" Flt (Prim dy)
1ST LT ROBERT F. TOUHEY, Flt Comdr "D" Flt JR., 0447326, AC	(Add dy)	
2ND LT JAMES R. SNYDER, 0800063, AC		Element Ldr (Prim dy)

/s/ James M Meng
/t/ JAMES M MENG
Major, Air Corps
Commanding.

Dist: Norm.

A TRUE COPY:

Gabriel A. Semo

GABRIEL A. SEMO, Capt., AC.

73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
APO # 951

17 April 1944.

SQUADRON ORDERS)

NUMBER 12)

1. Following dy asgmts directed:

NAME	RELD FR	DETAILED TO
CAPT ALAN B. SINAUER, 0570262, AC	Crypt Sec O (Prim dy) S-2 O (Add dy)	S-2 O (Prim dy)
1ST LT JOHN S. MOFFATT, 0860395, AC	Com O (Prim dy)	Crypt Sec O (Prim dy) Com O (Add dy)

Dist: norm.

/s/ John J Hussey Jr
/t/ JOHN J HUSSEY JR
Captain, Air Corps,
Commanding.

A TRUE COPY:

Gabriel A. Semo

GABRIEL, A. SEMO, Capt., AC.

73RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
APO #951

20 April 1944.

SQUADRON ORDERS)

NUMBER 13)

1. Following dy asgmts directed:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RELD FR</u>	<u>DETAILED TO</u>
CAPT ALAN B. SINAUER, 0570262, AC		Intell Control O (add dy)
CAPT GABRIEL A. SEMO, 0570175, AC	Sq Adj (Add dy) Mess O (Add dy) Adm Insp (Add dy) Insurance O (Add dy) Statistical O (Add dy)	
1ST LT LEO W. EHLERT, 0577151, AC	Pers Equip O (Prim dy) Asst S-3 & Weather O (Add dy) Asst Sq Adj (Add dy)	Sq Adj (Prim dy) Mess O (Add dy) Adm Insp (Add dy) Insurance O (Add dy) Statistical O (Add dy)
1ST LT JAMES B. BIRD, 0576886, AC	Asst S-2 O (Prim dy)	Pers Equip O (Prim dy) Asst S-3 & Weather O (Add dy)

Dist: norm.

s/s/ John J Hussey Jr
t/t/ JOHN J HUSSEY JR
Captain, Air Corps
Commanding.

A TRUE COPY:

Gabriel A. Semo

GABRIEL A. SEMO, Capt., AC.