

**502ND  
BOMB  
GROUP**

# 502nd Bombardment Group (VH)

## Commanders

Lt Col Thomas H. Joyce	12 May 1945 to 26 June 1945
Colonel Kenneth O. Sanborn	26 June 1945 to 13 September 1945
Colonel John N. Reynolds	13 September 1945 to deactivation



Colonel Kenneth O. Sanborn

## Deputy Commanders

Lt Col Frank R. Pancake	3 August 1945 to 9 September 1945
Lt Col Frank W. Iseman	14 September 1945 to 3 December 1945
Major Frank E. Boyd	3 December 1945 to deactivation

## Operations Officers

Lt Col Frank W. Iseman	20 June 1945 to 18 August 1945
Major Charles R. Walters Jr.	18 August 1945 to 5 October 1945
Major Finlay F. Ross	5 October 1945 to deactivation

## Data

Activated: 25 May 1944

U.S. Training Base: Grand Island, Nebraska

Deployed to Guam:

Ground Echelon - 6 April 1945

(Arrived Guam 11 May 1945 - USS Cape Newenham)

Air Echelon - April/May 1945

## Squadrons

### 402nd Bombardment Squadron, 502nd Bombardment Group

#### Commanding Officers

Major William H. Cummings	27 June 1945 to 27 July 1945
Major Rex Downtin	27 July 1945 to 5 October 1945
Major William G. Swartz	5 October 1945 to 16 November 1945
Captain Arthur W. Dipple	16 November 1945 to 20 November 1945
1st Lt Harley S. Leach	20 November 1945 to 29 November 1945
1st Lt Thomas E. Hughes	29 November 1945 to 3 December 1945
1st Lt Johnny L. Grimer	3 December 1945 to deactivation

#### Operations Officers

Major Rex Downtin	2 July 1945 to 27 July 1945
Major William G. Swartz	27 July 1945 to 1 October 1945
Major George W. Ramey	1 October 1945 to 16 November 1945
Captain William C. Lloyd	16 November 1945 to 25 November 1945

### 411th Bombardment Squadron, 502nd Bombardment Group

#### Commanding Officers

Lt Col Rudolph R. Seymour	10 July 1945 to 19 August 1945
Lt Col Robert W. Miller	19 August 1945 to 4 October 1945
Major John C. Burton	4 October 1945 to 19 October 1945
Major Frank E. Boyd	19 October 1945 to 3 December 1945
1st Lt Albert B. Solari	3 December 1945 to 9 December 1945
1st Lt Thomas E. Hughes	9 December 1945 to deactivation

#### Operations Officers

Major John C. Burton	21 July 1945 to 25 August 1945
Major Finaly F. Ross	25 August 1945 to 1 October 1945

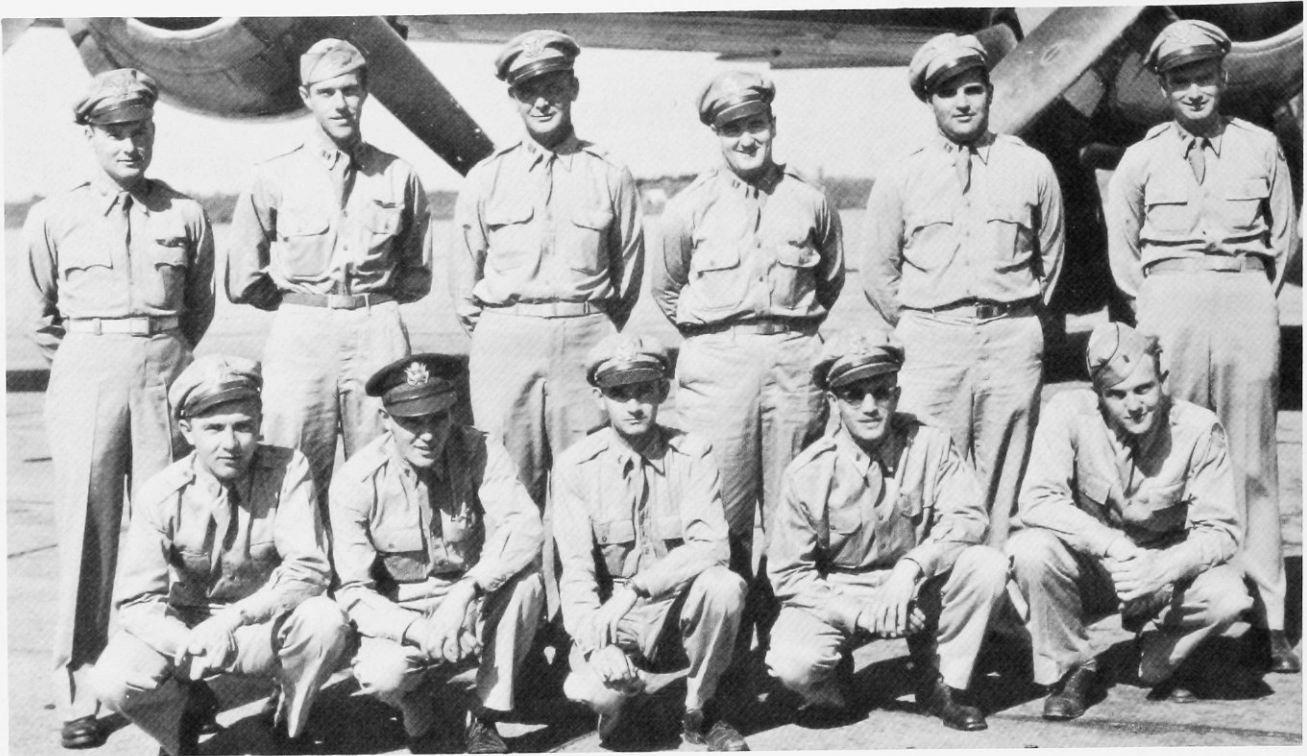
### 430th Bombardment Squadron, 502nd Bombardment Group

#### Commanding Officers

Major Ned L. Jacoby	31 July 1945 to 14 August 1945
Lt Col Robert E. Booth	14 August 1945 to 22 October 1945
Major Theodore J. Bedwell	22 October 1945 to 28 October 1945
Captain Jack F. Tomasheska	28 October 1945 to 28 November 1945
1st Lt William J. Filler	28 November 1945 to deactivation

#### Operations Officers

Major Ned L. Jacoby	31 July 1945 to 21 August 1945
Major Theodore J. Bedwell	21 August 1945 to 22 October 1945
Captain Jack F. Tomahseska	22 October 1945 to 28 October 1945



Staff of 430th Squadron, 502nd Bomb Group  
 (Back L-R) Lt. Col. Robert E. Booth, Capt. Ned Jacoby, Major Frank T. McCormick  
 Capt. Marvin R. Vaughn, remainder uncertain  
 (Photo Credit: Ned Jacoby collection)

## 502nd Bombardment Group Narrative History

Constituted as 502nd Bombardment Group (VH) on 25 May 1944. Activated on 1 June 1944. Trained for combat with B-29's. Aircraft flown by the 502nd and all other three groups of the 315th were built by the Bell Aircraft Corporation at their Marietta, Georgia, plant between January and September 1945. The 315th Wing was in fact unique, for it was equipped entirely with the only true variant of the B-29 ever manufactured—the B-29B. These aircraft were actually stripped-down versions of the normal B-29, bereft of the General Electric gun system and a variety of other components, in order to save weight and increase bomb-carrying capacity. The resultant unladen weight of 69,000 pounds was a vast improvement, lessening the strain on engines and airframe and enabling the payload to be increased from 12,000 to 18,000 pound ordnance. In addition, the 502nd and all of the other 315th groups were equipped with the new AN/APQ-7 "Eagle" radar sets which gave a much clearer

presentation of ground images through a wing-shaped radar vane slung beneath the fuselage. It also gave a biplane effect in appearance. The "Eagle" was the product of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Eagle radar development group. It had been designed especially for night missions. Navigation and bomb-aiming skills were excellent. During WWII, this special antenna and equipment for precision night radar missions was so secret that no B-29's were ever shown with it, and there are no actual official photographs in existence. The only armament on these aircraft was in the tail, where two .50 caliber machine guns were installed. Missions had to be planned and prepared so that briefing material could be slanted from the radar point of view.

The 502nd group moved to Guam, April-June 1945, and were assigned to the 20th Air Force. It entered combat on 30 June 1945, when the group bombed enemy installations on Rota. The group bombed Japanese-held Truk early in July 1945. It flew its first mission against the Japanese home islands on 15 July 1945, and afterward operated principally against the enemy's petroleum industry. The 502d was awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation for attacks

on the coal liquefaction plant at Ube, the tank farm at Amagasaki, and the Nippon oil refinery at Tsuchizaki, in August 1945. The Ube plant was one of the few plants that remained in high production in Japan. It was not only destroyed on August 5, but also sunk, when the surrounding dikes were breached and the area inundated. Permission briefings were so thorough that RDOB's had to spend hours going over radar briefing material, including scope-reconnaissance photos of the target, and they had to prove they could draw the details of the target from memory. After the war ended, the 502nd dropped food and supplies to Allied prisoners in Japan, and participated in several show-of-force missions over Japan. The group was inactivated on Guam on 15 April 1946.

SQUADRONS: 402nd; 1944-1946: 411th; 1944-1946: 430th; 1944-1946.

STATIONS: Davis-Monthan Field, Arizona, 1 June 1944; Dalhart AA Field, Texas, 5 June 1944; Grand Island AA Field, Nebraska, 26 September 1944 to April 1945; north-west Field, Guam, 12 May 1945 to 15 April 1946.

COMMANDERS: Lt. Colonel Estley R. Farley, 9 July 1944; Lt. Colonel Robert C. McBride, 1 August 1944; (Then Colonel) Maj. General Kenneth O. Sanborn, USAF, (Ret.), 6 October 1944 to 15 April 1946.

CAMPAIGNS: Air Offensive, Japan; Eastern Mandates; Western Pacific.

DECORATIONS: Distinguished Unit Citation: Japan, 5-15 August 1945, Cluster To

INSIGNE: Unicorn with Wings (Unofficial)

GROUP TAIL MARKING: The black letter "H" with a black diamond. Each aircraft was assigned a letter-numerical designation, e.g., H-27, H-30, etc. The number was affixed on each side of the fuselage, slightly aft of center.

*The following final edition of volume 2, Number 21, 502d Bombardment Group "The Short Snorter," dated 7 February 1946, is quoted in its entirety, as a very important part of this history. It was published by a SSgt. Robert R. Stone. In addition to Sgt. Stone, his staff consisted of: "Ernie"; "Bob"; "Irv"; "Butch"; "Alf"; "Walt"; and "Julian." The 502nd historical staff is deeply grateful to these men and also grateful to Lt. Col. William E. Shine, USAF (Ret.) (then Lt.), radar maintenance officer, 411th Bomb Squadron for finding a copy of "The Short Snorter" in his WWII footlocker.*

"The Short Snorter"

(A Comprehensive History)

#### THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE 502ND BOMBARDMENT GROUP

**In this final edition, the "Short Snorter" presents a comprehensive history of the 502nd Bomb Group, compiled by S/Sgt Robert R. Stone with the aid of the official group history. We hope this history will be useful to all members of the group for reference at future**

#### **reunions and bull sessions in which everyone explains how he and the 502nd Group won the war.**

The calendar on the wall of the Message Center at Davis Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona, read 1 June 1944. Only the monotonous ticking sound of a revolving mimeograph machine disturbed the silence of the drab room. A bored corporal, wearing glasses and a wispy moustache picked a still wet sheet of paper out of the mimeograph stacker, and with a bored look, checked the sheet to see if it was centered correctly. Apparently satisfied, he placed it back on the pile and went back to his pipe and magazine. The sheet of paper contained the names of 11 officers and 82 enlisted men. These 93 men were to form the nucleus of the 502nd Bombardment Group (Very Heavy).

Little did that bored corporal realize that the sheet of paper he had casually glanced at and thrust aside was the foundation of an organization destined to encompass thousands of fighting men working in an effort to smash the power of Japanese industry, destroy ten of Nippon's most vital fuel producing and storage centers, and help bring the most devastating war in the history of civilization to an early end.

Later the same day, the same mimeographing machine in the same drab room clicked off orders calling for the activation of the subordinate units of the 502nd Bombardment Group (VH), consisting of the 402nd Bomb Squadron, 411th Bomb Squadron, 430th Bomb Squadron, and the 29th Photo Lab, Bomb Group, all Very Heavy.

The new bomb group, still 93 names on a sheet of paper, was ordered to Dalhart Army Air Base, Dalhart, Texas, just four days later. On 9 June 1944, Lt. Col. E. R. Farley assumed command of the infant 502nd.

Although the Air Echelon remained at Dalhart until winter, the Ground Echelon of the 502nd moved to its operational training base at Grand Island, Nebraska, completing the movement by 30 September 1944. On this date, Lt. Col. Robert C. McBride commanded the Group. Commanding the Squadrons were Major W. H. Cummings, 402nd; Major R. R. Seymour, 411th; Major R. E. Booth, 430th; and Lt. John J. McHugh, 29th Photo Lab.

On 6 October 1944 Colonel Kenneth O. Sanborn joined the unit and assumed command, and by 22 November the entire 502nd, both ground and air, had moved from Dalhart to the base at Grand Island. One week later, sixteen complete combat crews, approximately one-third of the total expected, reported for duty and were assigned to crews, Squadrons, and the Group. Things were beginning to shape up.

Not only did things shape up on the field, but also in the town of Grand Island. GI was pretty lively for a place of 19,000 population. There was the Glovera, the Yance Hotel, the Log Cabin, the Legion, the V.F.W., plenty of good whiskey to drink, and above all, a plentiful supply of the female element. It didn't take very long for the 502nd to take over.

Perhaps the largest and most significant change in the Group framework occurred when the decision was made by

higher headquarters to undertake the majority of flying training at a base other than Grand Island. The decision was based on the poor weather conditions encountered in Nebraska as compared with the ideal warm weather found in the Caribbean. Hence, a trial period was requested by the second Air Force. The site selected was Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, which as thereafter known as the "Gypsy Task Force." On 18 December, nineteen crews were sent to the Advanced Command Post in Puerto Rico to begin the first phase of flying training. Eventually the 45 crews of the Group were to spend an average of 60 days training in the Caribbean area.

By 31 December the actual fighting men of the Group, the flying combat crews were rapidly approaching peak strength.

On that date, the first training accident in the Group occurred. At 00115Z, a B-29 commanded by Captain Frank H. Beales and carrying a crew of six, took off for a routine training flight from the Gypsy Task Force Base at Borinquen Field. Immediately after takeoff number one engine was feathered and the aircraft continued around the traffic pattern in preparation for a landing. In the final approach the aircraft rolled over into the dead engine and crashed 500 yards from the end of the runway.

With the exception of S/Sgt. (then Corporal) Carl W. Holmberg, 430th, who was seriously injured and suffered second degree burns, the injuries to the other members of the crew were fatal.

During the month of January 1945, the 502nd had at long last reached the desired position of an integrated, full-fledged organization with training for both Ground and Air Echelon in full swing. January also saw the decision to strip down the 315th Wing ships of all armament except that in the tail of the ship.

The month of January also saw four more training accidents hit the 502nd, two of them resulting in fatalities. No casualties resulted from the other two, one a wheels up landing and the other a crash landing due to lack of gas.

The hard, intensive training continued through the succeeding months and then on Saturday evening, 7 April 1945, at the Army Air Field in Grand Island, Nebraska, a review was held. At 1800 hours, with the sun sinking in the west, officers and men of the Ground Echelon, 502nd Bomb Group, in full field dress, marched past hangars and parked B-29s and B-17s and on to the ramp of the air field.

Parading were virtually all of the 36 officers and 689 enlisted men of the Ground Echelon. As the column turned to march off the ramp, it split in two. One group marched directly down to waiting sleeping cars and entrained immediately. The second returned to its area, for its train was to pull out some two or three hours later. It was the last formation. The movement of the Ground Echelon from Grand Island to the theater of combat had begun.

Six weeks later, another ceremony occurred. It was early morning, Sunday, 20 May, on the northwest tip of the Island of Guam. Beginning at 0630 men of all organizations were marched down to the main square of the 502nd Bomb

Group area. They stood in a neat rectangle before a tall tree which had been cut from the jungle the day before, stripped of branches and bark, and erected in the center of the square. Around them were rows of two-man tents converted during the single week which the men had spent on the island into makeshift houses and homes.

As the command, "Raise the Nation's colors" was given the flag was raised, and as it went fluttering up in the morning breeze, the entire Group sang the National Anthem. The event was not official, for the Group is not authorized to fly its own colors. But in the minds of all the men present, it marked the end of the period of initiation, when the Group has staked out its place in the jungles of Guam and set its temporary home in preliminary order. It was now ready to prepare for construction of its permanent home, and for operations.

The early days were the roughest. Tents had to be erected, paths laid out and the jungle cleared. These were just a few of the multitude of problems facing the newly arrived Group. The most important of all problems during this period was a shortage of water. During those first few days there was only one large tank for mess and drinking facilities, and one trailer. Water was virtually rationed and only a helmet per man was available for bathing. There were severe shortages of PX equipment, notably writing paper and soap. Food consisted of "B" and "C" rations, and each man was allowed one can of beer—warm, of course—a day.

Work progressed rapidly, in fact much faster than most of the Group had anticipated. There was some grumbling from the men about the worthlessness of picking up stones in one place and moving them to another. But by far most of the men realized that their area had been well-planned, that it was clean, neatly arranged, and compared very favorably with other areas in the Wing. Most of them were proud of it.

A mess tent, chapel, theater and baseball diamond were erected, and life began to be a little more livable. The only light available was that supplied by candles. Whenever the Supply tent ran out of candles, it meant into the sack at sunset.

Back in the States, the 502nd Bombardment Group (Very Heavy) was on the last lap of the training race at the beginning of May. All personnel who were undergoing flight training returned from the Gypsy Task Force in Puerto Rico by the first of June. We were getting nearer and nearer to our goal—bombs on Japan.

In mid-June, the combat crews and maintenance men began to arrive at Northwest Field. The 502nd was ready for war.

In the month of July, the thing happened which for months, everybody in the Group had been working and sweating—the first mission against the Japanese Empire was flown. On 15 July, with Colonels Sanborn and Iseman flying as passengers, four planes took off as part of a Wing force of 71 aircraft. They bombed the Nippon Oil Refinery at Kudamatsu. The next morning all four returned. Operations against the enemy were finally under way.

The Group raided Japan five times during the month of July with an increasing number of planes participating in each mission. July, however, was not without its tragedies.

It was 9 July, the day of the first Truk mission, just after 2300 hours. Nine planes of the ten scheduled to take off roared down the runway and lifted into the night sky. Then it came time for Lt. Floyd W. Wilkes. As his plane took off it was seen to waver and slip from sight beyond the Northeast end of the island, crash into the sea, and explode. The entire crew of ten was killed.

On 19/20 July, the Group put bombs on the Empire again. Ten planes from the 502nd raided the Nippon Oil Refinery at Amagasaki. Reconnaissance photos revealed that the Group's effort was in the money with eight of the ten remaining tanks in the tank farm assigned to this group destroyed.

On 22/23 July, ten Group planes participated in the raid on the Ube Coal Liquefaction Company.

Three nights later, on 25/26 July another mission was flown. For the first time it was target Tokyo—not actually in Tokyo, but just south of the city in the heavily-defended Yokahama-Kawasaki district. Hayama Oil Refinery and Mitsubishi Petroleum Center constituted a joint target. It was a tough target and once again tragedy struck. While on the bomb run, the B-29 flown by likeable Capt. Henry G. Dillingham was coned by searchlights and hit repeatedly by bursts of flak. Despite the violent enemy action the plane continued on course until it burst into a sheet of flame and plunged vertically down. The entire crew perished.

Shortly afterward came the raid on the oil refinery at Shimotsu. Again ten Group planes participated. When the results of the raid came in, a tremendous wave of exhilaration swept through the Group. Three-fourths of the storage capacity and nine-tenths of the gasometer capacity of this target were destroyed. It was the first time a large target had been almost completely destroyed by pinpoint and precision instrument bombing.

On 1 August, we had a return engagement at Kawasaki. Again it was a rough deal. Four of the Group planes received flak damage and several others were attacked by enemy fighters. It was the first time that fighter attacks had been delivered against planes of the 502nd. Twenty-four enemy fighters were sighted over the target. The enormous number of searchlights over the target—estimates ran as high as 130—and the large amount of flak again shook the crews up considerably. All agreed that the Tokyo area was one of the tougher targets. All agreed that they did not want to go back to this particular spot. The targets suffered 75% damage and were knocked out of operation.

Four nights later the Group paid another visit to Ube. This time the 502nd put 25 planes into the air. Crewmen reported fire in almost every direction they looked while over the target. They were beginning to see the results of the raids being conducted by other Wings and other Air Forces simultaneously with raids from the 315th.

The damage photos, which came in a short time later, told a remarkable story of destruction. The target had not

only been completely blown up. It was also sunk. Built on a small square of reclaimed land and protected by a seawall, the refinery had been badly flooded by bombs which blew great breaches in the wall. In a letter of commendation to the Air Force commander, Admiral Nimitz cracked that it was the first time that bombers had "sunk" a factory.

On 9/10 August, the Wing went back to the Nippon Oil Refinery at Amagasaki. There were a large number of fighters in the air, but no attacks. The Japs seemed reluctant to tangle with the 29s. One plane, however, in what might have been an attempted ramming, dove in very fast on a plane of the late Capt. Pananes, breaking away within 15 feet of the nose. Destruction of the target was 100%. Results approaching annihilation were apparently becoming routine for all 315th raids.

Immediately after the return of the crews from Amagasaki, the news that the Japanese Emperor had made his first peace bid came over the air. The crews had returned on the morning of 10 August. That night the announcement came over the radio.

This half war — half peace period during early August found both officers and men completely preoccupied with moving. The deadline for evacuating the old tent area was set at 7 August.

The Group was now able to settle back for a breather. After the first week in August operations were slowed down, and while there was still a small amount of building to be done, there was a roof over everybody's head. The move to the permanent area was almost completed. Only officers remained in two-man tents, lined up in rows next to the Officers' Mess. They were scheduled to build their own barracks in August.

In short, the Group was just getting its second wind.

## VICTORY!!

Into this situation the atomic bomb was exploded on 7 August. Discussion of it was on everybody's tongue. Disbelief was followed by fantastic tales exaggerating its potency. Yet everyone realized that the war would surely be much shortened. Three days later the second bomb was on Japan, and now the Soviets entered the Pacific War.

There was a small celebration late in the night of 10 August when the Japanese radio broadcast the first report of the Nipponese surrender offer. A few flares were fired and a small sound of cheering was heard, but the excitement did not approach the fireworks on Okinawa.

The Wing was still hot on the trail of the Nippon Oil Company. Having already destroyed its refineries at Kudamatsu and Amagasaki, the Wing began planning for an attack on the refinery at Tsuchuzaki, in the Akita area. This refinery was located on the far northwestern shore of Honshu Island, close to Siberia. And yet the plans were made to reach the long fingers of the 315th Wing even to this distant target.

While the Group awaited the Jap answer to our

ultimatum, the mission to Akita was postponed a day. Many of the men in the Group were thinking, "Perhaps they need prodding. Perhaps this is another Jap trick." On 14 August the Far Eastern Air Force was out in full strength. Carrier airplanes had resumed their attacks. It was not too big a surprise when the Twentieth Air Force went back into action.

The Akita mission was now on for the night of 14/15 August. It was to be a maximum effort. For this mission our Group mustered a record of 32 planes.

Takeoff time was set for 1630 hours.

Only a few minutes before zero hour, the Japanese radio unofficially broadcast that the government had finally accepted the American counter-proposal. Ready to lead the mission, General Armstrong delayed the takeoff. Five minutes passed, then ten, but there was no cancellation from 20th Air Force. At 1643 the first plane rolled down the runway and the raid was underway.

The bomb load was somewhat smaller than the ten tons carried on the previous mission to Amagasaki. But a record distance without bomb bay tanks was to be flown—a round trip of 3700 miles to the target. Plenty of gasoline was needed.

At Northwest Field the official announcement of Japan's surrender was received early in the morning of 15 August. This added an extra touch of drama to the suspense of "sweatin' them out." By noon the first crews were dribbling in. They reported virtually no opposition. A few bursts of flak and a scattering of searchlights were all.

One by one the crews came in until finally Major Dan Trask's plane, the last to take off, was in.

All crews reported that the results could be seen for miles. Apparently the Japs had thought the Superforts could not reach out so far and were operating refinery and storage units at near capacity. The huge fires looked like oil conflagrations. The 502nd combat crews were a very tired but very happy bunch of lads that morning of 15 August.

On the way home, the crews heard the news over the radio. President Truman had announced that the Japanese had formally accepted the surrender terms. The airmen came in grinning and told the story of their mission with obvious relish. Most knew it was their last interrogation.

That afternoon there was a huge celebration. The scope of festivities for enlisted men was limited because of regulations restricting distribution of hard liquor to them. At the Officers' Mess, drinks were on the house, and the party was a huge, uninhibited success. It was a case of men who had been under extreme pressure for weeks blowing off an enormous amount of steam.

In the succeeding weeks the big sleek bombers became angels of mercy. Loaded with food, medicine and clothing, they flew mercy missions dropping their cargos to American and Allied soldiers imprisoned in Japan. Even as the Japanese surrender delegates were signifying their defeat aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on 2 September, vast armadas of Superforts ranged the skies over Japan dropping their crates of manna from heaven.

In order to fly these POW missions, the 502nd crews had to fly first to Florida Blanca Field in the Philippines to pick up cargo parachutes and then to either Saipan or Tinian to pick up the packaged supplies. During the night of 27 August while flying one of these missions to Saipan, Capt. Claude S. Lawson crashed into a hillside while making an instrument letdown in bad weather. The nine crew members and two passengers were instantly killed.

Four days later, on a flight to Manila, airplanes of the 411 Squadron took off from the Philippines to return to Guam. Crews landing at the base reported very bad weather enroute, possibly a typhoon. Anxiety spread through the Group when it became apparent late the night of 31 August that Capt. William J. Pananes and his crew were overdue.

As time passed with no word, search parties were sent out to scour the sea area along his flight path. No traces were found except one empty life raft. Sadly the Group added these casualties to its list. In little more than two weeks it had equalled its losses in combat.

The war was over and the biggest problem erased from everyone's mind. Now another question was as on everyone's tongue — "When do we go home?" In the barracks, in the mess halls, in the showers, everywhere that men gathered, the topic of conversation was the point system and how soon it would get them home.

Gradually the Group began to turn its talents in other directions. The educational program got underway and on 3 September the SHORT SNORTER printed its first edition. Area beautification and a training program began. The usual griping accompanied it.

On 12 September Colonel Sanborn went to Wing Headquarters as Assistant Chief of Staff and command of the 502nd Bomb Group was assumed by Colonel John N. Reynolds.

A slow trickle of old timers began to head back to the States to be discharged. The trickle soon turned to a torrent as the point score was slashed. The "Old Guard" was going home. New faces were appearing. The Officers' Club and the Enlisted Men's Club were enlarged and redecorated. A new ball diamond, basketball courts, tennis courts, and a beautiful, large theatre were built. A library, photo shop and a hobby shop soon opened. The 502nd proved that it could spring to the forefront in peace as it did in war.

Two Sunset Missions in late November took away a good share of our planes and crewmen. In December flying slowed down. Another crash at Tinian claimed the lives of Sgts. John Lannert and Charley Swearman.

Another slash in the point score and hundreds more headed home. The once mighty, but still proud 502nd looks to its new home in Hawaii.

There's been a lot of water under the bridge since the bespectacled corporal at Davis Monthan Field tossed aside the mimeographed sheet of paper containing 93 names. Since that day thousands of men have served their nation and Bomb Group courageously and well. In years to come they will proudly recall that they were once members of the 502nd Bombardment Group (VH)—one of the finest outfits



in the Army Air Force.

-S/Sgt. Robert R. Stone

#### HISTORICAL SOURCES

“Air Force Combat Units of WWII, History and Insignia,” edited by Maurer Maurer; “B-29 Superfortress” by John Pimlott, Bison Books Limited, London (available at Waldens Book Stores); “Point of No Return,” by Wilbur H. Morrison, Times Books (out of print); “Mission with LeMay,” by General Curtis E. LeMay; “Impact, The Army Air Forces ‘Confidential’ Picture History of WWII” (in 8 books, Historical Times, Inc.); “Sky Giants Over Japan, A Diary of a B-29 Combat Crew in WWII,” by Chester Marshall; “The Global Twentieth, An Anthology of the 20th Air Force in WWII, Volume I,” edited by Chester Marshall.

In addition to the above sources, Maj. Gen. Kenneth O. Sanborn, USAF (Ret.); Col. Howard J. Fry, USAF (Ret.); Lt. Col. Horatio W. Turner, III, USAF (Ret.); Lt. Col. William E. Shine, USAF (Ret.); Maj. L. A. Sliter and MSgt. Bailey, HQ USAF Historical Research Center, Maxwell AFB, Alabama; and (then) SSgt. Stone and the 502nd Bomb Group “The Short Snorter” staff provided an abundance of material. On behalf of all the officers and men of the 502nd Bomb Group (VH), I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of them for making the compilation of this portion of the 315th Bomb Wing (VH) possible.

In connection with the above, the following letter from General Sanborn is included as a very important part of history, many thanks sir!

Stephen M. Bandorsky

Lt. Col. USAF (Ret.)

Bill Mathay

Don Harris

# 502nd Bomb Group



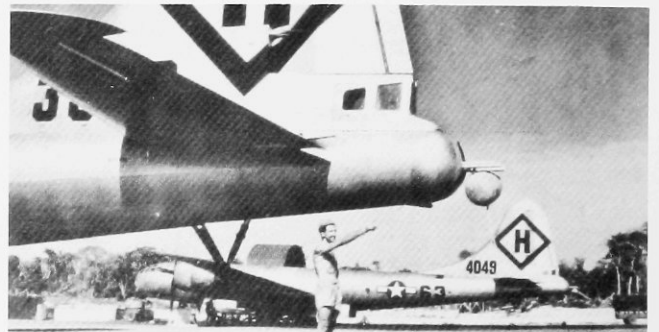
Flight Line



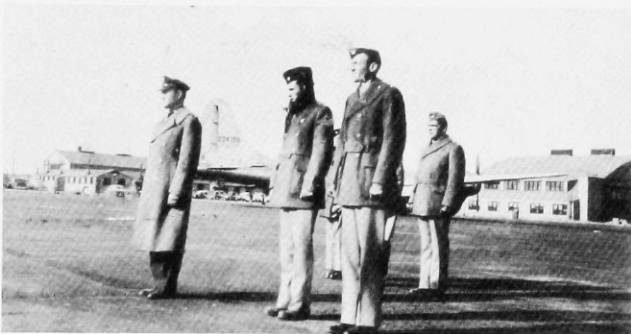
Mess Hall



Officers Club



Tail Marking



Col Sanborn and Lt Col Pancake  
Parade prior to overseas departure



Col Sanborn and Bandorsky



Col Sanborn

## 502nd Bomb Group



Lt. Gen. Giles, Brig. Gen. Armstrong  
Mr. Dillingham, Capt Dillingham  
(Mr. Dillingham witnessed Capt Dillingham's  
takeoff on his last mission.)



Capt Horatio W. Turner, III, A/C Crew 1102, 411th  
Bomb Sq., returning from last group mission of the war.  
Oil Refinery at Tsuchuzaki, in the Akita area (N.W. shore  
of Honsku Island, close to Siberia). This was the longest  
mission of the war, 17 hours - note fatigue. End of war  
was announced while crews were returning to base.



(Standing L-R) M/Sgt Walter Fredericks, unknown,  
S/Sgt Walter Craig, Tex (?)  
(Seated) S/Sgt Jake Jablonski, Sgt Paul Brown

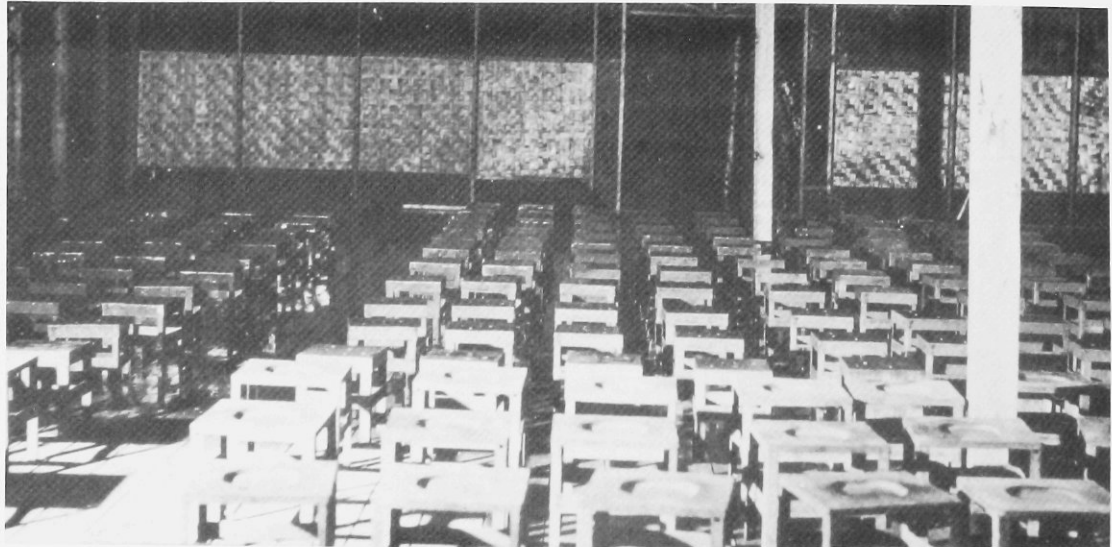
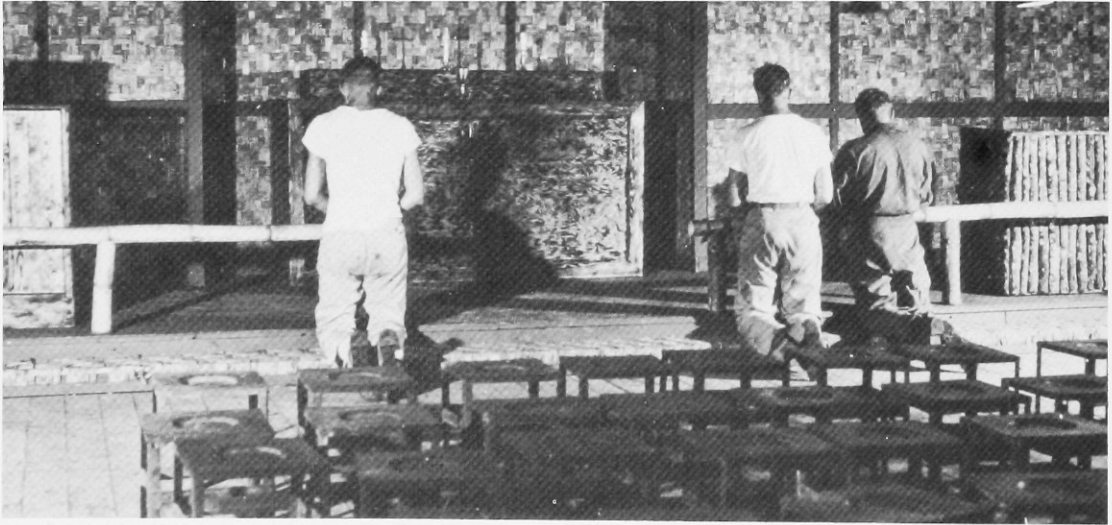


Sgt Pettis



Lt. Newbert, Lt Cackowski,  
Lt. Roberts, Capt. Bond

502nd Bomb Group  
Chapel



## 502nd Bomb Group Opening of 502nd Bomb Group Officers Club



(L-R) Lt. Wagner, Capt. Bond, Lt O'Connor, Lt Fuller, Lt Feld, Lt Roberts, Capt Turner, Lt Trogdon, Lt Dugo, Lt Cone, Lt Bandorsky, Lt Cackowski, Lt Newberg, Capt Freedman, Lt King (411th Bomb Sq.)



Bus Siemon, Livingston, Flanagon



Ike Dyer, Elmer Siemon, Capt Murphy



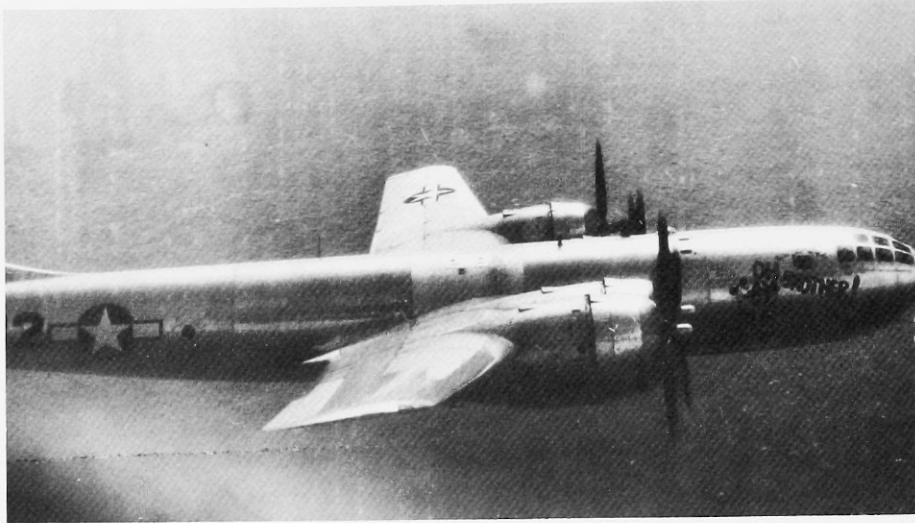
# 502nd Bomb Group Opening of 502nd Bomb Group Officers Club



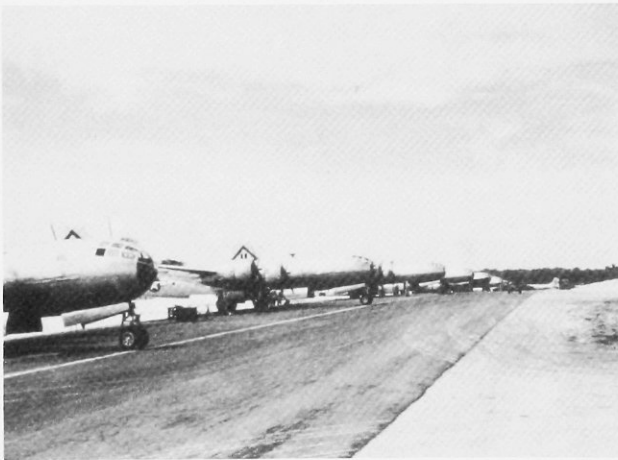
**502nd Bomb Group  
Dedication of 502nd Bomb Group Service Club**



## 502nd Bomb Group Aircraft



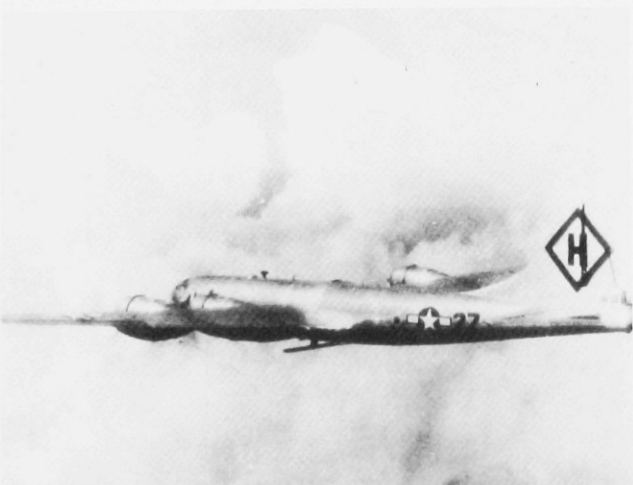
H-32 411th Bomb Sqdn.



First crew and aircraft of 502nd Bomb. GP to land at N.W. Field Guam, June 1945 (Buzzard Base). Col. Sanborn/Capt. Dillingham.



Getting ready for take off. 502nd Bomb. Gp.



Crew # 1108 — Capt. Turner, Note AN/APQ-7 “Eagle” Radar Vane slung beneath fuselage.



Taxiing out at mission time.



# 502nd Bomb Group



502nd Insignia



502<sup>nd</sup> BOMB GROUP (VH)

502nd Bomb Group (VH)