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ACTIVITY DURING WWII

SERVED AS AN AIR OPERATIONS SPECIALIST WITH THE 63RD BOMB SQUADRON, 43RD BOMB GROUP (H), 5TH AIR FORCE FROM JULY 1943 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1945. SERVED AT PORT MORESBY, DOBODURA, MANUS ISLAND, NADZAB, WADKE ISLAND, OWI ISLAND, HOLLANDIA, MOROTAI ISLAND, LEYTE, MINDORO, LUZON AND IE SHIMA ISLAND.

The pictures I had prior to 1 October 1944 were destroyed by fire when the engine of a Jap plane landed on my bed and trunk when I was on Morotai Island. Our squadron was the only one in the 5th Air Force that was equipped with Low Altitude Bombing Radar (LAB711). So, as soon as an airfield had a runway able to handle a B-24 we would have two aircraft, four crews with ground personnel plus three enlisted men from Sqdn HQ (operations, intelligence and a communications Sgt with code books). VBOMBCOM gave us our search areas and most of our missions were 10 to 11 hours duration. Sometimes we would get a 12 hour assignment so an extra fuel tank was hung in one of the bomb racks.

It just so happened that at Morotai the three of us out of Sqdn HQ were assigned a prefab at the end of the air strip. We were close to the end of the airstrip and next to our prefab was a hardstand with B25's and A20's which were loaded for early morning takeoff to support the infantry. We could hear the sound of combat from the airstrip. About midnight we had a RED alert so we went to sit by our covered slit trench. There was anti-aircraft artillery at the end of the strip and we could hear the distances called into them. At five miles out we went underground. After a couple of hits the enemy bird aimed at the planes on the ground. We heard explosions which continued for about ten minutes. But we stayed underground. About twenty minutes later we heard American voices saying "well it looks like all of them are gone". We started yelling "we are over here" and stuck our heads out. And saw smoking parts of air plane parts all around. The anti-aircraft gunners got a good hit. The Jap plane left his engine on my bunk and trunk while the rest went onto the hardstand and the loaded aircraft.

The only clothes we had left were what we grabbed when we went to the trench. 'Nuff said.