



It is felt that all Officers and Enlisted Men of the 505th Bombardment Group will appreciate a brief history of the Group from its activation to the war's end. Such was the thought in mind when we produced this booklet. Space does not permit covering all of operations and administration, but the pertinent facts are contained herein and we trust that during the ensuing years you will derive pleasure in reviewing it.

Charles M. Eisenhart Colonel, Air Corps Commanding.



We were activated on the 11th of March 1944 at Dalhart Army Air Field at Dalhart, Texas. The cadre for the unit was drawn from the old 9th Bombardment Group. We commenced training at Harvard, Nebraska with a handful of Officers and Enlisted men, few of whom had ever known each other, but with a commanding Officer who had a well earned reputation of being one of the hottest four engine pilots in the Air Force. Colonel Robert A. Ping had recently flown General Arnold in all the theaters of combat and had established a time record in a B-17 from Australia to the United states. As organization proceeded, Officers and Enlisted Men arrived in quantity and crew training started in earnest on 1 July, 1944.

Throughout the period of training we were hampered by shortages in personnel, particularly air crew personnel, and in equipment. Maintenance was a serious problem Stateside and many of us gaped unbelievably when a formation of six B-29s went overhead. Eventually it was done, we sweated out POM inspections and were declared fit

. Changes were constantly being made within the organization, but the line up on 5 November, when the ground echelon departed, was this: Commanding Officer, Colonel Robert A. Ping; Deputy Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Charles F. Heidrick; Adjutant, Major Erik H. Erikson; Intelligence Officer Major Harold S. Funk; Operations Officer, Major John R. Wilson; Engineering Officer, Major Vernon W. Boccock. The 482nd, 483rd, and 484th Bombardment Squadrons were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ellery D. Preston, Major James A. Ferguson and Lieutenant Colonel Charles M. Eisenhart, respectively.

The Ground Echelon departed from Seattle on the 14th of November, and, after an interminably long ocean voyage debarked at Tinian Town early on the 24th of December 1944. Meanwhile, the Air Echelon and combat crews were being processed through Kearney, Nebraska, Hamilton and Mather Fields, California. The theory was that the Ground Echelon would arrive and prepare the camp site.

When the Ground Echelon moved into the area allotted to the Group, we found that Major Julian Dendy, who later became Commanding Officer of the 482nd Bombardment Squadron, his crew and four other crews were on the island.

The work of building a camp commenced immediately, and despite lack of tools, poor but not intolerable living conditions, shortage of water and a month of eating C and K rations we made great progress. Enlisted personnel pitched shelter halves and lived in them until pyramidal tents could be secured. Officers were quartered in the one Quonset hut in the area.



Coupled with the normal confusion attendant upon overseas organization, we were subjected to several air raids. Actually Saipan was the target, but the Betty's always made their bomb run over Tinian. Every alarm saw most personnel in search of a foxhole. The possibility of Jap snipers in and around the 505th served to keep the perimeter so on edge that many rounds of ammunition were expended in the general area of waving sugar cane fields. No known contact with the enemy was made, and after initial uneasiness the majority of haphazard firing ceased.

In spite of the nuisance raids and the constant drain on Group personnel for many and varied details, the organization and building of the Camp had progressed so fast that it was possible to run a practice mission six days after our arrival. Because of the distance separating the billet area from North Field, the problem of transportation gave us some concern, but eventually a line bus was put into operation leaving the area for the line every half hour. A battle scarred building, once a Japanese Fighter Command Headquarters, was transferred into a line mess hall.

During the month of January, we were kept busy flying training missions and preparing in other ways against that day when we would strike the enemy. On the 21st day of January, Captain Slaughter led the Group against the Moen Airfield in the Truk Atoll. Three days later, in a combined operation with the Navy and elements of the 7th Air Force, the Group attacked an airfield and installations on Iwo Jima. On the 29th of January we again went to Iwo Jima for another shot at an airfield, and here saw our first enemy aircraft, he made a pass and didn't fire. Meanwhile, we were kept very busy with a lot of things which weren't actually flying but were necessary.

Major Wilcox and Captain Wilkinson were engaged in working up and publishing SOP for use with- in the Group. More mess halls were put into operation, showers with rationed water were assembled and a nightly picture show relieved us of a

little monotony. The briefing room was completed and we moved out of the circus tent hard by West End Avenue. The value of Air-Sea Rescue was brought forcibly to us when Captain Johnnie Wier and crew, with Major Ferguson, Commanding Office of the 483rd Squadron as passenger, went down at sea in a burning place. Corporal Estle Davidson floated for five days in a one many dinghy before being rescued. This was a high price to pay, but we all learned something when we talked to Corporal Davidson and realized he consumed only a half-pint of water in 5 days! We gained a spiritual boost when he said "have faith that you'll be picked up", but after a month of the Rock we were sure of it.



### **WE ATTACK!!**

The 4th of February was the day, the port and urban area of Kobe was the place. We loaded incendiaries with a few frags thrown in for good measure. Twenty aircraft hit the target. Veterans of the European Theater said they had seen more flak, but none so accurate.

The Nakajima Aircraft Assembly plant located at Ota was the next target. Twenty-one aircraft were airborne, and eighteen attacked the target by visual means. Eight Aircraft were lost. Slaughter and Barnhart collided over target, Schnoeder was last seen with approximately ten fighters on him. Quay crashed on take off, Nicholle was unheard of after he called the Tower on return. Halloran and Caab ditched with all crew members rescued, Lowry ditched, and four crew members, including Lieutenant Lowry, were not seen after impact.

**NEXT**



On the 15th of February, 15 aircraft were airborne in a strike against the Mitsubishi Aircraft engine Factory at Nagoya. Because of weather, only four aircraft attacked the primary. Hachijo Jima, Hamamatsu, and Maisaka and Fukuda were attacked by our planes on this mission.

Twenty aircraft hit the port and urban area of Tokyo on the 19th of February. This was a secondary target and was attacked because the primary, the Nakajima Aircraft Engine factory, was socked in. Kawasaki, Toyohashi and Shisucka were last resort targets attacked this day.

Tokyo was the target on the 25th of February, eight aircraft bombed the primary by radar, and seven aircraft hit last resort targets of Hamamatsu, Toychashi, Numazu and Kaga.

The Musashina Aircraft Engine Factory in Tokyo was the target March the 4th, but because of inclement weather, the port and urban area of Tokyo was attacked. Twenty-one aircraft dropped 250 500 lb M17 incendiaries on Tokyo and 12 500lb M17s on Hamamatsu.



Early morning of 10 March, the Group attacked the port and urban area of Tokyo from 6,400 feet in the first of the low level attacks. Twenty aircraft dropped incendiaries on the primary, and other aircraft hit Kamisugoura Airfield, Haha Jima , Chichi Jima and Guguan. Captain B. L. McCaskill, with Lt. Col. Macombe as pilot, ditched on return to base. All aboard were rescued.

The second of the low historic blitz missions came on the night of 11/12 March when 25 aircraft bombed the port and urban area of Nagoya. Our planes loaded with E-46 incendiaries went in between 7,500 and 8,00 feet. Results were not as good as we had expected.

Osaka's port and urban area was next on the list for the Group. 26 aircraft unloaded incendiary bombs from 5,000 to 9,400 feet early on the morning of the 14th. Eleven attacks from enemy fighters were experienced, but we received only minor damage.

On the night of 16/17 March 32 aircraft attacked the great shipbuilding center of Kobe. We carried incendiaries and frag clusters - excellent results were obtained with no losses to the Group.

Nagoya was again bombed on the night of 18/19 by 31 aircraft from the Group. Heavy, accurate flak was encountered, and Captain Shipp was forced to ditch after number 2 and 3 engines received flak hits. All aboard were rescued by the destroyer Gatlin after floating for 38 hours.

Twenty-one B-29s from the Group struck the Mitsubishi Aircraft Engine Plant on the 24th of March. Results looked good but photo reconnaissance showed we were a little short of the MPI. However considerable damage was done to the city. Heavy flak was encountered over the bay and dock area.

On the 27th of March, the Group inaugurated a new type of warfare when they dropped aerial mines in the Shiomonoseki Straits area. Here we encountered the most accurate flak and search- lights to date. Many aircraft were hit, but we had no casualties. Mining was continued on the night of the 30th when 25 aircraft dropped 297 mines in Love Field in the Straits area.

On the 3rd of April, 29 aircraft were airborne on two separate missions, Nine aircraft proceeded to the Inland Sea area near Kure where they dropped 88 mines. Twenty aircraft went to the Nakajima Aircraft Engine Plant at Koizumi. Four aircraft found visual bombing possible, the balance hit the port and urban area of Tokyo as briefed.

The Mitsubishi Aircraft Engine Works at Nagoya were attacked on the 7th of April. Thirty -two planes were airborne, 21 of which struck the assigned target and virtually destroyed it. Hamamatsu, Ujijamada, Akazaki, Kushimoto and Owase were also attacked on this mission. We destroyed 8 enemy aircraft with 3 probables and 7 damaged.

Kanoya East Airfield was the target on the 8th of April, but because of weather difficulties, a primary radar target at the city of Kagoshima was attacked. One aircraft formed with the 6th Bombardment Group and attacked the primary visual.

Ten aircraft reinforced minefield Mike in the Shiomonoseki Straits area on the night of the 9th of April.

The longest mission to date was flown on the 12th of April when two Squadrons went to the Hodagaya Chemical Plant at Koriyama. McGugin and Wilcox led the mission and had to go around twice to avoid a collision, and McIntyre went in all alone. The arsenal area of Tokyo was hit on the night of the 13/14th of April. Thirty-five aircraft hit the target with excellent results. Lieutenant Kretzer and crew were lost on this mission. Many "balls of fire" were encountered in the target area.

Twenty-five aircraft unloaded fire bombs on Kawasaki on the night of the 15/16th of April. Harper had his number 4 engine shot out over the target and had to crash land at Iwo. Found his right wing gas tank holed, elevator tip shot off and aileron

cable cut. Two Squadrons attacked Kokubu Airfield on Southern Kyushu on the 17th of April. Enemy opposition was weak and ineffective and results were excellent.

Kokubu Airfield was the target again on the 21st when 22 aircraft bombed in three formations with good results. Kushira Airfield on Kyushu was the next target on the list, but because of weather difficulties only two planes got to it. Five other aircraft attacked Kanoya Airfield. We went back to strategic bombing on the 24th of April when 10 aircraft from the Group bombed the Hitachi Aircraft Company west of Tokyo.

On the 26th of April we were back on the airfields. Eighteen aircraft attacked Nittagahara Airfield on Southern Kyushu by radar methods. Kokubu Airfield was attacked again on the 27th of April by eight aircraft from the Group. Kokubu was hit again on the 28th by two Squadrons. The Tachikawa Army Air Arsenal was the next target to be hit, but because of cloud cover the formation of 9 aircraft attacked the Japanese Propeller Plant at Hamamatsu. Twenty-three aircraft were airborne on the night of the 3/4th May to reinforce minefield Mike in the Shimonoseki area and Able in the Kobe-Osaka area.

Opposition was light and the mines were dropped as briefed. Mining continued on the night of the 5/6th of May when 24 aircraft were airborne in a strike against three minefields. King Field in the Tokuyama area, Able in the Kobe-Osaka area and Tare in the Nagoya area were reinforced.

On the 7th of May, two formations attacked airfields at Oita and Usa. The formation on the Oita raid made a second pass at the target and was jumped by approximately 60 fighters. 1st Lt Richard A. Gray and crew went down over the target, and Lt Andrew DeV. Penn, who was injured over the target, was lost in ditching. The formation at USA ran into stiff fighter opposition also, and Lt McKillip was rammed over the target by an enemy fighter.

The Okinawa Campaign support continued on the 10th when the two formations attacked Miyazaki and Kanoya Airfields. The formation attacking Kanoya received aggressive enemy aircraft attacks. Saeki Airfield was next on the list. Eight aircraft attacked with excellent results on the 11th of May. The urban area of Nagoya was attacked with incendiary bombs on the 14th of May with excellent results. Captain Kelly ditched on return, and Lt Low bailed his crew out over Iwo Jima. Nagoya was attacked again on the night of 16/17th of May. The target was completely covered by clouds and we experienced very little in the way of enemy defenses.

Twenty-four aircraft carried general purpose bombs on a raid to Hamamatsu on the 19th of May. 1st Lt Tony Obert crashed into the sea shortly after take off on this mission. Thirty-five aircraft attacked the urban area of Tokyo on the night of 23/24 of May. Bombing results were achieved. Approximately 40 "balls of fire" were observed from the target area to landsend.

Tokyo was again the target on the night of 25/26 May. Heavy, intense, accurate flak was encountered over the target, and we lost four crews this night. Colonel Charles Eisenhart and Captain Jones led the entire XXI Bomber Command in the highly successful daylight incendiary attack on Yokohama on the 29th day of May. Yokohama was never again a target for B-29s. Thirty-one planes started the month's operations in a daylight incendiary raid. Eighteen of our aircraft were damaged by flak, and one plane was lost over the target. Results were excellent.

On the night of 7/8 June, we commenced a period of mining which lasted until the 4th of July. All mining done in the XXI Bomber Command during this period was carried out by the 505th Bombardment Group in the most successful operation of its kind in the history of warfare. Twenty-six aircraft reinforced minefields Mike,

Love and Charlie on the night of 7/8 June. Twenty-eight planes were airborne on the night of 9/10 June to sow mines in the fields of Love and Mike in the Shimonoseki Straits area.

On the night of 11/12 June, 26 planes sowed mines in minefields Mike and Zebra, located in Tsuruga Bay, was a new field for this Group. Thirty planes were airborne on the night of 13/14 June on a mining mission against mine-fields Love and Uncle. Three forces of thirty aircraft attacked minefields Charlie, Nan and Mike on the night of 15/16 June. Twenty-eight aircraft reinforced minefields Mike and Able on the night of 17/18 June. Twenty-eight planes were airborne on the 19/20 June to reinforce minefields Mike, Uncle and Zebra and twenty-eight planes dropped 232 mines. In the early morning hours of the 22nd of June, 30 aircraft attacked minefields X-ray, Yoke and Uncle were next reinforced when 27 planes were airborne on the night of 23/24 June.

**NEXT**



On the night of 1/2 July, 28 planes sowed mines in minefields Love and Nan. The night of 3/4 July found three forces of 26 planes carrying mines in fields William, Zebra and Mike. Minefield William located at Funakawa was the longest flown to date by this Group.

Bombing missions were again undertaken by the Group on the night of 6/7 July. The port city of Shimizu was the target and 33 aircraft attacked with excellent results. Wakayama, industrial city of Shikoku, was fired on the night of 9/10 July by 35 aircraft from the Group.

Tsuruga, port city of North Central Honshu, was bombed through a heavy undercast on the night of 12/13 July. Reconnaissance photos showed excellent results. Kuwana, small industrial city southwest of Nagoya, next felt the might of the 505th. On the night of 16/17 July, 32 aircraft struck with fire bombs with excellent results.

The port city of Choshi, east of Tokyo, was attacked by 12 aircraft on the night of 19/20 July with excellent results. The Group departed from incendiary bombing and carried 2,000 lb general purpose bombs against a precision target on the 24th of July. The target was the Aichi aircraft factory, and it was attacked by 33 aircraft. A grab bag list of last resort targets was also hit this day.

Tokuyawa was attacked with incendiaries on the night of 26/27 July by 32 aircraft. The last mission of July flown on the night of 28/29 July when 32 aircraft raided Ujyamada on Honshu. Thirty-eight Group aircraft hit Nagaoka on the night of 1/2/August and produced the most tremendous fires we have ever seen. Thirty aircraft hit Naebashi, north of Tokyo, on the night 6/7 August with excellent results. One Squadron led by Captain Mel Cash attacked the Toyokawa Naval Arsenal southeast Nagoya with excellent results. The long awaited Yawata raid came on the 8th of August.

Thirty-one aircraft were airborne, 3 of which failed to attack. Heavy, meager to moderate flak was encountered over the target and excellent results were produced. Despite rumors of peace, the Group went out three Squadrons strong, to attack the Marifu Marshalling Yards on the 14th of August. Visual bombing resulted, and by the time the third Squadron reached the target it was demolished. The final mission was flown on the night of 14/15th of August when 5 aircraft struck the Kumagaha urban area with excellent results.

**GROUP STAFF ON VJ DAY**

Commanding Officer	Col. Charles M. Eisenhart
Deputy Group Commander	Lt. Col. Robert E. Blauw
Executive Officer	Major Philip Curtis
Adjutant	Major Erik H. Erikson
Intelligence Officer	Major Harold S. Funk
Operations Officer	Lt. Col. John E. Wilcox
Engineering Officer	Major Vernon W. Bocock

#### **482nd Bombardment Squadron**

Commanding Officer	Major Julian Dendy
Executive Officer	Major Richard E. Thomas
Adjutant	Capt Kenneth L. Fletcher
Intelligence Officer	Capt Lewis S. Bowdish
Operations Officer	Major Leon H. Golinsky
Engineering Officer	Capt Francis L. Posniak

#### **483rd Bombardment Squadron**

Commanding Officer	Lt Col Cyrus R. Lewis
Executive Officer	Capt. I. Bonham
Adjutant	1st Lt Lloyd A. Bowman
Intelligence Officer	Capt Elvin F. Sheehy
Operations Officer	Major Horace A. Payne
Engineering Officer	Capt Fredrick H. Fitzgerald

#### **484th Bombardment Squadron**

Commanding Officer	Lt Col William J. Gibson
Executive Officer	Capt Barclay E. Russell
Adjutant	1st Lt Ollie J. Dear
Intelligence Officer	Capt Jack G. Chapman
Operations Officer	Major John R. Changala
Engineering Officer	Capt Ward W. Huffman

#### **EFFECTIVENESS**

85% of Airborne A/C attacked Primary Target

91% of Airborne A/C were effective