

Kenneth Lacey

I was ball turret gunner with Ray Ramstad's crew and flew my first mission May 5, 1944, to Polesti and my last mission Sept 17, 1944, as tail gunner with C.O. Col. Ambrosin to Rakas, Hungary. I was with 455th Group 742nd squadron.

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Picture taken after completing 50 missions Sept. 17, 1944, with 455th Bomb Group 742nd sq. Flying with C.O. Colonel Edwin C. Ambrasin as Tailgunner to Marshaling Yards at Rakos, Hungary.

The only crew to return from the Moosbierbaum, Austria, raid June 26, 1944. Our squadron, the 742nd, lost 7 ships and crews including Lt. Raider E. Ramstad, who was piloting a new crew. He bailed out, and was taken prisoner for more than a year.

Lt. Kelley was Operations Officer and had previously lost his crew. We flew with him at times after that. Lt. Swanner became our First Pilot.



Back Row:

Sgt. William F. Pelkey – Tailgunner
Sgt. Chester R. Pratt – Waistgunner
Lt. Henry Kelley – Pilot and Assistant Operations Officer
Lt. Glen W. Nelson – Bombardier
Lt. Charles E. Swanner – Co-Pilot

Front Row:

Sgt. Anthony C. Brodeur – Radio & Nosegunner
Sgt. Howard Blumberg – Waistgunner
Sgt. James R. Thomas – Engineer & Top Turret
Sgt. Kenneth D. Lacey – Ball Turret Gunner

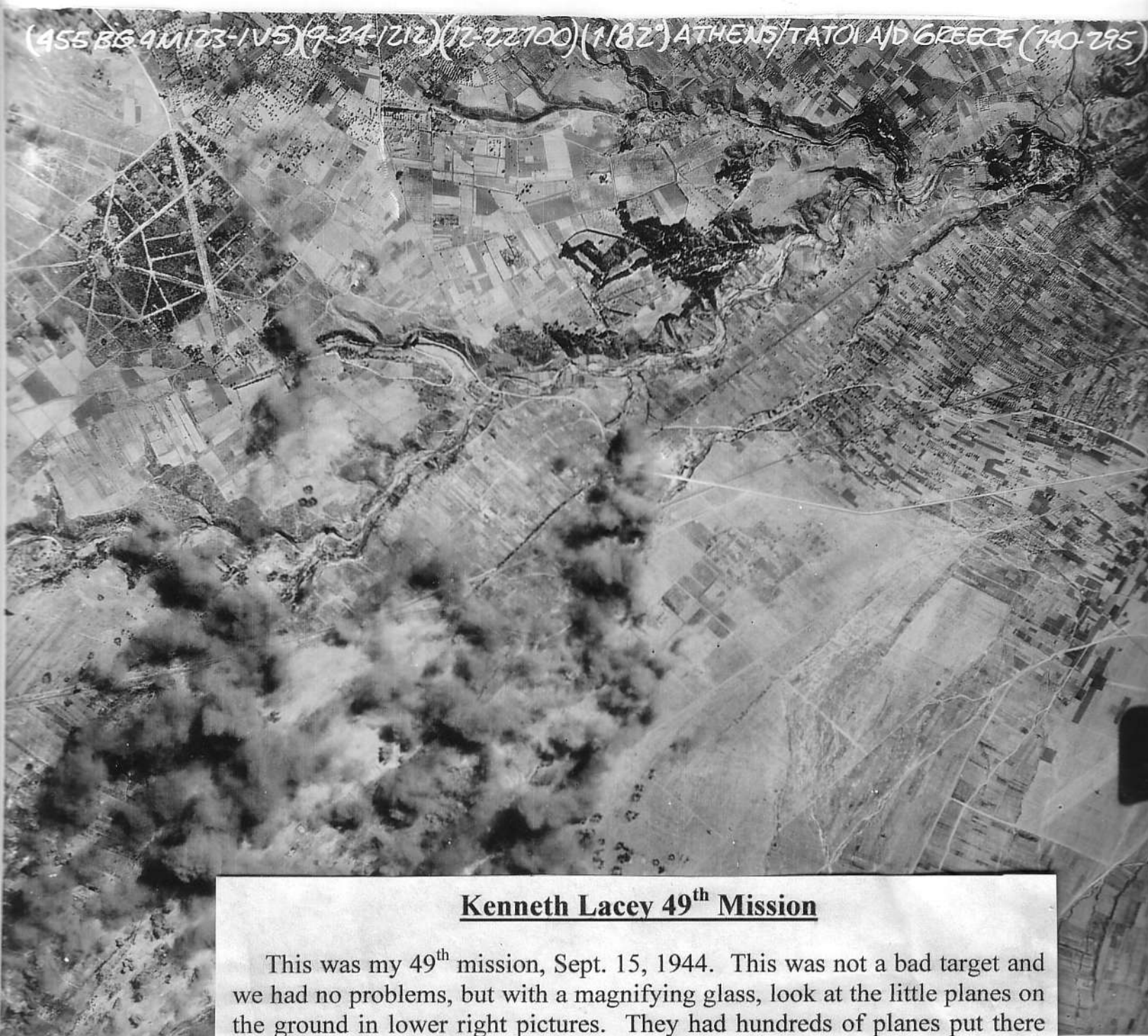


This is an ME 109. The Romanian pilot brought Col. Gunn back from prison camp and, as I remember, the pilot was given a P-51. He then flew for U.S.



The large door in the middle of the Old Castle is where we had some of our briefing before missions and interrogation after missions. The smaller door on the left was the Red Cross door where they brought out a long table and had a shot of Irish Whiskey, coffee, and donuts after a mission.

(455 BG 4 MI 23-1V5) (9-24-1212) (17-22700) (1182°) ATHENS/TATO AND GREECE (740-295)



Kenneth Lacey 49th Mission

This was my 49th mission, Sept. 15, 1944. This was not a bad target and we had no problems, but with a magnifying glass, look at the little planes on the ground in lower right pictures. They had hundreds of planes put there for future use but couldn't get out with them as too short of pilots and fuel.



This is an interesting picture of P-51 Fighter escort we had. My grandson with the computer system says he might find out who the pilot was with the tail markings and number. (Note: look at bottom of copy Airdromeat, Athens)

Raider Ramstad

These important copies were given to me by Raider Ramstad. He had been my pilot and went down June 26, with Sensenbrenner at Moosbierbaum. This info refers only to the 742nd sq. Ray retired from the Air Force as Lt. Colonel. He should have been a Full Colonel but due to his more than a year in prison camp, he missed a promotion and the military never followed through and made the connection. Ray was able to obtain these classified reports.

ORIGINAL cy

742ND BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
APO 520 US Army

6 July 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Records

TO : Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520, US Army. Attn: Historian. (THRU: Channels).

1. Unit history of the 742nd Bombardment Squadron (H), 455th Bombardment Group (H), 304th Wing, Fifteenth Air Force for the period of 1 June 1944 to 1 July 1944.

a. The present designation of the unit is 455th Bombardment Group (H).

b. There were no changes in organization.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.

(1) at beginning of period--96 officers and 411 enlisted men.

(2) net increase---0 officers and 0 enlisted men.

MY MISSIONS FLOWN
FORM JUNE 1944
(3) net decrease---18 officers and 34 enlisted men.

(4) at end of period--78 officers and 377 enlisted men.

g. (1) 2 June 1944. 10 aircraft with 39 officers and 60 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Miskolc, Hungary. The mission was successful; all aircraft returned; there were no casualties.

(2) 4 June 1944. 11 aircraft with 42 officers and 66 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Genoa, Italy. Mission was successful; all aircraft returned; no casualties.

(3) 6 June 1944. 9 aircraft with 35 officers and 54 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Brasov, Rumania. Mission was successful; all planes returned, there were no casualties.

(4) 7 June 1944. 11 aircraft with 43 officers and 67 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Genoa, Italy. Mission was successful; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

(5) 9 June 1944. 10 aircraft with 38 officers and 63 enlisted men participating in the bombing of Munich, Germany. Mission was successful; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

(7) 11 June 1944. 10 aircraft with 37 officers and 60 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Giurgiu, Rumania. Mission was successful; all planes returned there were no casualties.

(8) 13 June 1944. 10 aircraft with 30 officers and 62 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Munich, Germany. Mission was successful; one plane failed to return; 3 officers, 1 flight officer, and 6 enlisted men are missing in action.

(9) 16 June 1944. 10 aircraft with 40 officers and 62 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Vienna, Austria. Mission was successful; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

MY 2ND FLT LDR CHECK (COMBAT) (10) 22 June 1944. 11 aircraft with 36 officers and 60 enlisted participated in the bombing of Chivasso, Italy. Mission was successful; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

THIS WAS MY LAST FLIGHT WITH MY OWN CREW. FIRST TIME I LET AT SWANSEA T/O + HAND FROM LEFT SEAT ON A COMBAT MISSION (11) 24 June 1944. 10 aircraft with 36 officers and 61 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Craiova, Rumania. Mission was successful; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

(12) 25 June 1944. 11 aircraft with 41 officers and 66 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Arles, France. Mission was successful; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

ONE WAY ONLY (13) 26 June 1944. 9 aircraft with 34 officers and 54 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Moosbierbaum, Austria. Mission was successful; 6 planes failed to return; 23 officers and 36 enlisted men are missing in action.

(14) 28 June 1944. 6 aircraft with 22 officers and 36 enlisted men participated in the bombing of Karlovo, Bulgaria. Mission was successful; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

(15) 30 June 1944. 6 aircraft with 23 officers and 36 enlisted men took off to bomb Oderlap, Germany. Mission unsuccessful due to weather; all planes returned; there were no casualties.

h. Major Edwin C. Ambrosen led the squadron on the 13th, 16th and 25th of June.

1. Losses in action.

- (1) 13 June 1944--Munich, Germany.
 - F/O Hugh L. Massey, Jr.--missing
 - 2nd Lt. David R. Hawley--missing
 - 2nd Lt. Rudolph A. Soltys--missing
 - 2nd Lt. Alexander (NMI) Popadines--missing
 - S/Sgt. John J. Miller--missing
 - S/Sgt. Robert F. Gordon--missing
 - Sgt. Joel L. Gillkam--missing
 - Sgt. Garvin R. Handley--missing
 - T/Sgt. Chester P. Wantuck--missing
 - Sgt. William M. Slater--missing

- (2) 26 June 1944-Moosbierbaum, Austria.
1st Lt Samuel A. Archibald--missing
2nd Lt William (NMI) Ungemach, Jr.---missing
2nd Lt Elben B. Ezell--missing
2nd Lt William O. Barnard--missing
T/Sgt Harry (NMI) Seiler--missing
T/Sgt William J. Madzik--missing
S/Sgt Joseph R. Hachey--missing
S/Sgt Joseph A. Abbondondello--missing
S/Sgt Miller D. Todd--missing
S/Sgt Donald R. Teisinger--missing
- (3) 26 June 1944-Moosbierbaum, Austria.
2nd Lt William C. Jackson--missing
2nd Lt Robert H. Ahrens--missing
2nd Lt Thomas L. Smith--missing
2nd Lt Samp B. Tolar, Jr--missing
S/Sgt Robert R. Sloper--missing
Sgt Fred E. Beitz--missing
Sgt Sam (NMI) Christanus--missing
Sgt Dominick F. Citino--missing
S/Sgt Samuel S. Rosenberg--missing
Sgt Robert L. Truex--missing
- (4) 1st Lt Ralph D. Sensenbrenner--missing
2nd Lt Raider E. Ramstad--missing
2nd Lt Len (NMI) Giovannitti--missing
2nd Lt Bernard F. McGrane--missing
T/Sgt Longin J. Jastrzembowski--missing
T/Sgt Buren M. Nerren--missing
S/Sgt Harry C. Sellars--missing
S/Sgt Edward J. Renner--missing
S/Sgt Rollin M. Scott--missing
S/Sgt Russel W. Plowman--missing
- (5) 2nd Lt Jack D. Montgomery--missing
2nd Lt Lewis P. Sims--missing
2nd Lt Louis H. Friedberg--missing
2nd Lt Arthur R. Tilley--missing
Sgt. Myron L. Ovens--missing
S/Sgt William G. McCain--missing
Sgt Donald R. Michael--missing
Sgt Phillip (NMI) York--missing
Sgt Arthur (NMI) Amborski--missing
Sgt Sidney (NMI) Weiss--missing
- (6) 1st Lt James B. Brown--missing
2nd Lt Daniel C. McKee--missing
2nd Lt Julian S. Santina--missing
2nd Lt Sherman W. Ford--missing
T/Sgt Earl M. Shollenberger--missing
T/Sgt George L. Balmer--missing
S/Sgt Martin G. Goldman--missing
S/Sgt James A. Kimsey--missing
S/Sgt Eddy D. Grauwiller--missing
S/Sgt David (NMI) Yee--missing

- (7) 26 June 1944--Moosbierbaum, Austria.
1st Lt Robert A. Montgomery
2nd Lt Edward N. Sabo
2nd Lt David C. Brothers
T/Sgt Edward J. Fritchard
T/Sgt James B. Mason
S/Sgt Joseph M. Sutton
S/Sgt Thomas J. Leithauser
S/Sgt Henry G. Smith
S/Sgt Edward L. Kyle

j. Members who have distinguished themselves

(1) Captain Robert L. Blackmun--saving lives of three injured crew members from burning plane at San Giovanni Field, Italy on 20 April 1944. Awarded the Soldier's Medal.

(2) 1st Lt William A. Beck, Jr.,---brought his crippled aircraft back from a raid on Bucharest, Rumania on April 15 with 1000 flak and bullet holes in it and two wounded crew members aboard. Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

(3) 1st Lt Willis A. Pardoe--piloted his aircraft on an individual bombing run on a vital enemy railroad and directed his gunners in the destruction of seven (7) enemy aircraft. Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

(4) T/Sgt Walter W. Edge--engineer of Lts Beck ship on the raid at Bucharest. Worked constatly for two hours in 40 below weather to bring the ship back. Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

2. Enclosed is the War Diary of this organization for the period 1 June to 1 July 1944.

For the Commandig Officer:

E. B. Morrison
E. B. MORRISON,
1st Lt., Air Corps
Historian.

OFFICIAL:

William W. Berg
WILLIAM W. BERG,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Adjutant.

and heavy. Three ME-109's and 3 JU-88's were observed--one JU-88 made one unaggressive pass at the formation--no damage resulted and we made no claims. All planes returned safely. Results were good--43% of the bombs fell within 1000 feet and 85% within 2000 feet. One direct hit with a 1000 pounder was made on the west end and some direct hits and several near misses on the east end. Several Fortresses were observed in the target area making individual runs--with a heavy escort. Our escort today consisted of P-51's. The following personnel of Lt Keil's crew left for Capri Rest Camp today: Lts Keil, Crum, Leach and Pickerill plus T/Sgts Dote and Agnew, S/Sgts Medel and Oleyash.

25 June 1944. We suffered the hardest blow on a raid today, that this squadron has ever experienced; Six combat crews are lost--59 officers and enlisted men. Several were on their 50th mission and 21 were scheduled to go home soon. Many of our original crews went down. We had ten ships scheduled for a raid on a synthetic oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria--about 20 miles northwest of Vienna. Lt Watson did not get off the ground while Lts Taylor and Nelson were prior returns. Of the seven remaining ships which reached the target, only Lt Kelly and his crew returned safely. Escort was provided by P-38's and P-51's. Enemy aircraft were encountered at Bratislava at 0920. A group of ME-210's, ME-110's and JU-88's came up to meet the formation--the enemy aircraft succeeded in separating the escorts from the bomber formations. Then 50 to 60 twin engined aircraft made aggressive attacks from head on, diving to within 50 yards--then diving through the formation. Some of the enemy twin-engined planes stayed out of range and lobbed rockets at our formation--all were firing 20 millimeter ammunition. These attacks lasted until the I.P. was reached. Our planes were in F box, with Lts Kelley and Jackson in D-Box, second section, and our planes bore the brunt of the enemy attacks. In the target area and after bombs away about 60 ME-109's and FW-190's attacked out of the sun. They dove into the formation and pressed their attacks aggressively to 30 yards. One enemy fighter crashed into a bomber--both ships going down. Attacks were made singly, in pairs and threes from all around the clock. As usual, flak was encountered--intense, accurate and heavy. Very little definite information is available about any of our crews who went down. The following personnel are lost: Lts Robert A. Montgomery, Edward N. Sabo and David C. Brothers plus T/Sgt Edward J. Pritchard and James B. Mason and S/Sgts Joseph M. Sutton, Thomas J. Leithauser, Henry C. Smith, Edward L. Kyle and S/Sgt Francis M. Moore, photographer of the 743rd Squadron. No information on this crew except that they were lost in the target area as were all of our six ships. Lt James B. Brown was last seen in the target area with his engines smoking. His crew included: Lts Daniel C. McKee, Julian S. Santina and Sherman W. Ford, T/Sgts Earl M. Shollenberger and George L. Balmer, S/Sgts Martin J. Goldman, James A. Kimsey, Eddy D. Grauwiller and David (NMI) Yee. No definite information is available on Lt. Jack D. Montgomery's crew which included: Lts Lewis P. Sims and Louis H. Friedberg, S/Sgt William G. McCain and Sgts Myron L. Ovens, Donald R. Michael, Phillip (NMI) York, Arthur (NMI) Amborski and Sidney (NMI) Weiss. No definite information is available as to the fate of Lt Ralph D. Sensenbrenner and his crew which

69
IMPOSSIBLE
TO M.C. ★
MY CREW
FLEW WITH
LT KELLY AS
I WAS WITH
LT SENSEN-
BRENNER

DUE TO
GP LEADER
CALLING WAY BE-
HIND 1ST
SECTION BEFORE
TP AND NEVER
CAUGHT UP.

included: Lts Raider E. Ramstad, Len (NMI) Giovannitti, Bernard F. McGrane plus T/Sgts Longin J. Jastrzewski and Buren M. Nerren, S/Sgts Harry C. Sellars, Edward J. Renner, Rollin M. Scott and Russell W. Plowman. No news of Lt William C. Jackson and his crew which included: Lts Robert H. Ahrens, Thomas L. Smith and Samp B. Tolar, Jr., plus S/Sgts Robert R. Sloper and Samuel S. Rosenberg, Sgts Fred E. Beitz, Sam (NMI) Christanus, Dominick F. Citino, Robert L. Truex. Some information is available on Lt Samuel A. Archibald and his crew. They were last seen in the target area with fire behind #2 engine. They went down gently-straight and level-then feathered #2 and went into a circle. One witness reported 6 chutes from this plane-another, five. Besides Lt Archibald the crew included Lts William (NMI) Ungemach, Jr., Elben B. Ezell and William O. Barnard plus T/Sgts Harry (NMI) Seiler and William J. Madzik, S/Sgts Joseph R. Hachey, Joseph A. Abbondandolo, Miller D. Todd and Donald R. Teisinger. Lt Henry Kelly, assistant operations officer, did a remarkable feat in bringing his ship and crew home--our only crew to return. His crew gallantly fought swarms of enemy aircraft--the following claims were made: Cpl Anthony C. Brodeur, nose turret gunner, claims 2 FW-190's destroyed; Sgt Howard (NMI) Blumberg, right waist gunner, claims one FW-190 destroyed; Cpl James R. Thomas, tail gunner claims one FW-190 destroyed and Sgt Chester R. Pratt, left waist gunner, claims one FW-190 destroyed. Lt Kelley's ship was savagely attacked--the enemy fighters coming as close as 30 yards. It is felt certain that our six lost ships accounted for a number of Nazi fighters before they were downed. Today's disastrous raid was a blow to morale in the squadron--so many of our original combat men were lost. We only have 9 planes after today's raid and by juggling men six complete crews are all we can put in the air. However, this evening, we received a new crew and another ship, number 325, named "Chiggiebofumble", which means "Som of a B----" in Indian. The personnel of the new crew is as follows: 2nd Lts James R. Bush, Dayton A. Starnes and Harold B. Dale, F/O Raymond L. Kieffer, S/Sgts George W. Frank and Russell D. Eddingfield and Sgts Hipolis P. Kosinski, F. V. Karstens, Charles H. Morris and Pvt Herbert C. Vochatzer. The following enlisted ground personnel left for a 5 day furlough at San Spirito Rest Camp: Sgts Beck, Yates, Dorigan, Mackesy and E. N. Miller; Cpls Rein, Nugent, Lanham, Daugherty, T. A. Ross and Pfcos Ou I. Chong and J. H. Robinson. The commanding officer announced today that the following named flying officers have been promoted to the grade of First Lieutenant: Aaron Ariff, oh DS in the States, Thomas A. Bell, also home as the result of combat injuries, David C. Brothers, MIA today, James A. Cowden, Harry L. Crotzer, Jay S. Gaenzle, William J. Gross, Robert S. Hespeller, John Kaminsky Robert K. Knox, DS in the states, and Thomas A. Watson. Stone was unloaded today for an addition to the enlisted men's dayroom which, at present, is far too small to be adequate for the enlisted men's needs. Plans are to double the present size of the dayroom.

MY CREW
FLEW WITH
LT KELLEY
ON THIS
MISSION

MADE IT
NOW A P. 2
WATSON - who
DIA NOT GET
OFF THE
GROUND
26 June
(Hawthorn about)

27 June 1944 A mission was scheduled for today, but it was cancelled. Our squadron had six ships ready for the raid, an excellent record considering our losses of yesterday. However, the mission was cancelled. We received two new ships today. This was a quiet day--getting ready for the next mission.