

HEADQUARTERS
464TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
APO 520 U S Army

Narrative History for the Month of August, 1944

1. The present designation of this unit is 55th Bombardment Wing (H), Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520, U. S. Army.

2. Lt. Colonel Irvin W. Stowe, O-227231 was appointed Group Executive Officer, succeeding Lt. Colonel Henry K. Seal, O-102396, ordered back to the Continental United States for special duty.

3. The strength of the unit, commissioned and enlisted was as follows:

	Officers	Enlisted Men
As of 31 July 1944	374	1645
Net increase	41	34
As of 31 August 1944	415	1679

4. Striking enemy objectives in France, Northern Italy, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and Roumania, this Group flew a total of twenty one (21) combat missions, with a total of five hundred and ninety five (595) sorties, dropping 1371.09 tons of bombs on enemy objectives.

Enemy oil refineries and oil storage facilities received the brunt of our blows with nine (9) attacks, followed by four (4) attacks on enemy airdromes and installations. Three (3) attacks were made on gun emplacements on the coast of southern France in support of the Allied Invasion forces. Other targets attacked during this period were a harbor installation, an aircraft factory, a highway bridge, a chemical works, and an industrial area. A total of three (3) missions were cancelled.

5. This Group continues to show the way to other Groups in the 55th Wing in reducing the size of the German Air Force, by destroying nineteen (19), probably destroying five (5), and damaging two (2) enemy aircraft in the air, and destroying seven (7) and damaging five (5) enemy aircraft on the ground during this period. Total for the Group since 30 April 1944, date of first operational mission area:

<u>Air</u>		<u>Ground</u>
Destroyed	74	Destroyed 20
Probably destroyed	40	Damaged 12
Damaged	20	

6. Nine (9) members of this Group made the sacrifice for their country during this period: Four being killed in action, one (1) dying of wounds received in action, two (2) killed in a crash on take off on an operational mission, and two (2) killed in a motor truck accident. A total of eighteen (18) men were wounded in action, consisting of five (5) major and thirteen (13) minor wounds.

One hundred and nine (109) combat crew members were listed as missing in action, with forty seven (47) being returned to duty who were previously listed as missing in action. Many others are back in American hands who have not as yet been returned to this Group, including some personnel who were held as prisoners of war by Roumania and who were freed when that country capitulated.

7. During this period forty three (43) Purple Heart Medals, one hundred and sixty four (164) Air Medals, and three hundred and thirty nine (339) first, second and third and fourth Oak Leaf Clusters, fourteen (14) Silver Stars, seventy nine (79) Distinguished Flying Crosses and one (1) Bronze Star Medal were awarded to personnel of this Group.

The Silver Star was awarded to:

General Orders No. 2277 dated 2 August 1944

1st Lt Benjamin A. Folsom Jr.	O-798999	778th Sq
Missing in action		
2nd Lt Robert E. Hughes	O-687326	779th Sq

General Orders No. 2465 dated 10 August 1944

2nd Lt Albert E. Jones Jr.	O-693520	779th Sq
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General Orders No. 2671 dated 19 August 1944

1st Lt Armenio A. Anselmo	O-689441	779th Sq
S/Sgt Louis E. Cook	35118567	779th Sq

General Orders No. 2711 dated 20 August 1944

2nd Lt Gordon J. Broadhead	O-685821	779th Sq
2nd Lt Gerhard A. Heinicke	O-699415	779th Sq
2nd Lt Robert J. Thies	O-698489	779th Sq
T/Sgt Robert Cassity	15068667	779th Sq
S/Sgt Gerald L. Syran	39695047	779th Sq
S/Sgt Thomas N. Dilon	35683308	779th Sq
S/Sgt Dell J. Edmunison	35095909	779th Sq
Sgt William R. Ely	39284119	779th Sq

General Orders No. 2933 dated 29 August 1944

1st Lt Bert R. Hayes Jr. O-808835 779th Sq

The Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded to the following
Personnel on this Group:

General Orders No. 2277 dated 2 August 1944

1st Lt Raymond W. Drake Jr.	O-659363	776th Sq
T/Sgt John Hudec	20522608	778th Sq
1st Lt Robert E. Hughes	O-687326	779th Sq
2nd Lt Wallace Christensen	O-806841	779th Sq
2nd Lt Harry V. Howard	O-753071	779th Sq
2nd Lt Eugene A. Menges	O-698315	779th Sq
T/Sgt Angelo J. Torre	31281771	779th Sq
T/Sgt John J. Nicholson Jr.	32381720	779th Sq
S/Sgt Hurschel Allen	38444305	779th Sq
S/Sgt Alton L. Perrington	36585083	779th Sq
S/Sgt George F. Baldwin	36722648	779th Sq
S/Sgt John J. Knutelski	12204993	779th Sq

General Orders No. 2394 dated 8 August 1944

2nd Lt Emmett T. Drake	O-807717	778th Sq
2nd Lt Frederick A. Klingelberger	O-698301	778th Sq
T/Sgt Joseph W. Suehs	33553850	778th Sq

General Orders No. 2488 dated 11 August 1944

1st Lt Robert H. Garlock	O-659370	776th Sq
1st Lt Vernel E. Johnson	O-742083	778th Sq

General Orders No. 2531 dated 13 August 1944

Major William H. Reddell	O-1699426	776th Sq
Captain Kyle Spiller Jr.	O-430026	Hq Det
1st Lt Robert M. Johnson	O-732775	776th Sq
1st Lt George R. Wall	O-668851	779th Sq
2nd Lt Frank A. Graves	O-702417	776th Sq
Lt Col Charles F. McKenna III	O-369281	Hq Det

General Orders No. 2636 dated 18 August 1944

Captain William G. Shoemaker	O-789213	779th Sq
1st Lt Charles R. Ciprian	O-732621	779th Sq
1st Lt Max Litman	O-735854	779th Sq
1st Lt Norton S. Modlin	O-668737	779th Sq
2nd Lt Larry H. Dickason	O-733030	779th Sq
T/Sgt Marshall F. Farrell	11029220	779th Sq
T/Sgt William J. Fleming	32427562	779th Sq
T/Sgt Francis R. Holt	11027223	779th Sq
S/Sgt Walter J. Carrick	16111492	779th Sq

S/Sgt Edward R. Kofke	13126381	779th Sq
S/Sgt Silvio R. Onidi	31325253	779th Sq

General Orders No. 2685 dated 20 August 1944

Captain Sherman F. Martin	O-681156	778th Sq
1st Lt William A. Greene	O-751545	778th Sq
1st Lt Joseph J. Heilman	O-801369	778th Sq
1st Lt John J. Thelan	O-742627	778th Sq
2nd Lt Donald H. Mitz	O-696652	778th Sq
S/Sgt Norman Unger	12186482	778th Sq
S/Sgt Herman J. Kredo	19177018	778th Sq
S/Sgt Harry J. Kuester	39827779	778th Sq
S/Sgt Ernest J. Turner	20220504	778th Sq

General Orders No. 2728 dated 21 August 1944

1st Lt Amos H. Ross Jr.	O-678332	779th Sq
1st Lt Sidney E. Smith	O-680324	779th Sq
2nd Lt Armenio A. Anselmo	O-689441	779th Sq
2nd Lt Vincent C. Odenwald	O-685511	779th Sq
T/Sgt Willard C. Alsip	35671265	779th Sq
T/Sgt William J Voght Jr.	36164949	779th Sq
S/Sgt Frank L. Gates	38215028	779th Sq
S/Sgt Earl H. Heinen	16049737	779th Sq
S/Sgt Vester A. Ligon	1816910	779th Sq
S/Sgt George C. Steward	19084783	779th Sq

General Orders No. 2824 dated 24 August 1944

Captain James R. Tudor	O-424794	777th Sq
1st Lt Robert W. Sundlof	O-698788	779th Sq
1st Lt Ira C. Casey Jr.	O-793244	777th Sq
2nd Lt Richard B. Ferris	O-696348	776th Sq
2nd Lt William J. Hartter	O-1695426	776th Sq
2nd Lt Clyde S. Judy	O-750505	777th Sq
T/Sgt Earl T. Hird	17069865	779th Sq

General Orders No. 2887 dated 27 August 1944

Colonel Arnold L. Schroeder	O-18848	Hq Det
Major William G. Moore	O-418054	777th Sq

General Orders No. 2915 dated 28 August 1944

2nd Lt Jasper C. Davis Jr.	O-705534	777th Sq
2nd Lt Floyd E. Haupt	O-712819	777th Sq
2nd Lt Harvey R. Wyant	O-694524	777th Sq
T/Sgt Stiles B. Merrill	13031903	777th Sq
S/Sgt Lillard O. Brooks	39234805	777th Sq
S/Sgt Charence E. Kilarski	36657124	777th Sq

General Orders No. 2933 dated 29 August 1944

1st Lt William N. Campbell	O-816231	777th Sq
1st Lt Harry Glaze Jr.	O-748001	777th Sq
2nd Lt Ralph T. Mac Clemmy	O-821414	777th Sq
T/Sgt William M. Robb	37090841	777th Sq
S/Sgt Robert W. Loichinger	35788580	777th Sq
S/Sgt Marvin W. Maes	16022648	777th Sq
S/Sgt Alex Michels	32871443	777th Sq
S/Sgt John J. Ritter	12132665	777th Sq

General Orders No. 2691 dated 30 August 1944

2nd Lt Albert E. Hudeck	O-712831	777th Sq
T/Sgt Edward J. Masar	16148946	777th Sq
S/Sgt Leslie G. Copeland	37239618	778th Sq

The Bronze Star Medal was awarded to M/Sgt Lester W. Halonen, 16047917, of the 779th Squadron.

8. There were six (6) aircraft accidents during this period, resulting in five (5) aircraft destroyed, two (2) aircraft with major damage and two (2) aircraft with minor damage. Personnel losses were two (2) killed, two (2) major injuries and sixteen (16) minor injuries.

<u>Date</u>	<u>A/C #</u>	<u>Details of Accident</u>
10 August 1944	42-78248	Landing accident - nose wheel not lowered. No injuries - slight damage to A/C.
14 August 1944	42-51082	Crashed on take off on an operational mission. One (1) major and nine (9) minor injuries. A/C destroyed by fire and exploding bombs.
15 August 1944	42-78415	Landing accident nose wheel not lowered. No injuries - major damage to A/C
21 August 1944	42-51129	Fire started from auxiliary power unit during pre-flight. A/C burned and bombs in A/C exploded with complete destruction of this A/C. Flying debris damaged A/C 42-40965 and 42-78117 to such an extent that they were salvaged. A/C 42-50796 received minor damage. No injuries to personnel. Due to quick thinking and personal courage on the part of several members of the ground

		crews, two (2) other A/C were taxied out of danger before this A/C exploded.
24 August 1944	42-52526	Truck ran into this aircraft after landing from operational mission, while taxing to hard stand. No injuries - major damage to A/C.
27 August 1944	42-95348	Crash on take off on operational mission due to failure of #3 engine right after A/C became airborne. Two (2) fatalities, one (1) major and seven (7) minor injuries. A/C totally destroyed.

9. The control of venereal disease in this Group continues to improve. During this period there were four (4) new cases reported for an average of 25.81 percent per one thousand (1,000) men per annum. Reduction for past three (3) months:

	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>
New cases	16	5	4
Rate per 1,000 men	83.49	32.54	25.81

A continued educational program, supplemented by posters prominently displayed in all Squadron areas, together with more recreational facilities available for personnel is largely responsible for this improvement.

10. A total of two hundred and three (203) combat crew members finished their fifty (50) combat missions during the month of August 1944. Those men who were still here are anxiously waiting orders sending them back to the grandest place on Earth, "The United States of America." We of the ground echelon salute them for a job well done.

11. The morals of this Group during this period was excellent. Reduction of losses to personnel, the large number of men completing their fifty (50) combat missions and additional entertainment, recreational facilities, trips to Rome and rest camps having a great deal to do with this subject.

12. Thirty four (34) replacement combat crews were assigned to the Group during this period. These crews were all put through a three day ground training and orientation program.

13. The Group Chaplain, Captain Eastwood had a very busy month. Sixteen (16) services (Catholic and Protestant) were held for 1814 members of this Group, and four (4) services were held for personnel of the 387th Service Squadron, and two (2) men were baptized.

A total of one hundred and fifteen (115) letters of sympathy were written (through channels) to next of kin of men killed and reported missing in action, and seventy five (75) letters of inquiry from parents and wives were answered.

Sick and wounded were visited in hospitals and burial services were conducted for those men killed during this period. Forty five (45) men called on the Chaplain for advice and an article was written each week for the Group newspaper.

In addition to these duties Chaplain Eastwood has superintended the construction of the Group Chapel which is nearing completion. The first service was held in the Chapel without a roof, on Sunday, 27 August 1944. All in all the Chaplain has had a very busy and useful month with the opportunity of being of help to a great number of people.

14. Special Services under the direction of Lts. Bruce Jatton and Louis Biskup, ably assisted by S/Sgt Hoover and Cpl Felman continues to do an outstanding job.

During the month of August 1944 fifteen (15) different motion picture features were shown at thirty (30) performances at the outside theatre with an average attendance of five hundred (500) at each performance. A total of eighty (80) features with one hundred and sixty (160) performances have been given since arriving at this Base.

Six (6) U.S.O. shows have appeared before this Group

The library, located in the Special Service tent consists of fifty (50) copies of leather bound books, twelve hundred (1200) council books, numerous pocket book detective stories and popular magazines. An average of five hundred (500) books are checked out of the library at all times.

Thirty five (35) enrollments have been made in University Extension Courses.

Four hundred (400) copies of "Bomb Blast" the Group newspaper is issued weekly and is now in its eighth edition.

The "Dark Room Club" has been formed for the purpose of developing film by individual members of the Group, with a building being erected for that purpose.

Athletic areas have been prepared, consisting of two (2) basketball courts, ten (10) volley ball courts, two (2) soft ball diamonds, one (1) baseball diamond, eleven (11) horseshoe courts, one (1) gymnasium area. Volleyball and softball leagues have been formed with regularly scheduled games being played.

The volleyball league is headed by the Headquarters Officers team, who have yet to taste defeat in any series.

The leaders in softball are the 777th Squadron Engineering and the 777th Squadron Ordnance teams.

Plans are being made to form touch football and basketball leagues as the fall season approaches.

Special Services have a total of 1213 individual pieces or sets of athletic equipment available to personal of this Group.

15. This Group was privileged to take part in the preinvasion operations in Southern France, flying three (3) missions against gun emplacements. On "D" day itself, Colonel A. L. Schroeder, Group Commander, led the Group on an operational mission against enemy transportation facilities, knocking out the Donzero Highway bridge in Southern France, in direct support of our ground forces.

16. Special Services published four (4) issues of the "464th Bomb Blast", during this period which were complete with local and world news, cartoons, special articles and editorials.

17. General News and Happenings:

The 776th Squadron Officers Club, and the 779th Enlisted Mens Service Club were both opened during this period. Every Squadron and Headquarters Detachment, now have both an Officers Club and Enlisted Mens Service Club.

The building boom continues at a fast pace, many Officers and enlisted men working frantically to finish their tufa block homes before Herr Hitler and his gang throw in the towel. Colonel A. L. Schroeder, Group Commander officially opened his new residence with a house warming on the evening of 9 August 1944.

The Group Chapel is nearly finished and is a structure the Chaplain and members of the Group can well be proud of, including a church bell that will be secured in some mysterious manner.

Lt. Colonel Seal, Executive Officer of the Group since its activation, left the Group for special duty in the States. Colonel Seal had made many friends and the Group regretted seeing him leave.

Work continues slowly but surely on the briefing room and S-1, S-2, S-3 and Commanding Officer's Headquarters. Wagers are still being made that the war in Europe will be over before the building is ready for occupancy.

Joe Louis, worlds heavyweight boxing champion, paid a visit to the Base on 25 August 1944, making the rounds of the 464th and 465th

Groups, and acting as referee in several boxing bouts staged by Special Services.

Hot weather, wind and dust continues S.O.P on our hill, making working conditions unpleasant and dirty in our "all tent" camp, but we in this Group can "take it" and will continue to operate to the best of our ability to do our share in bringing about the early and complete defeat of the Axis Powers.

BIOGRAPHIES

1. Lt Colonel Irvin W. Stowe, O-227231, Group Executive Officer, joined the Group on 19 August 1944 replacing Lt. Colonel Henry K. Seal, who was returned to duty in the Continental United States.

Lt Colonel Stowe served with the Oklahoma National Guard as an enlisted man from 1922 until 1926, and was commissioned a 2nd Lt. Infantry in Officers Reserve in 1926.

Lt Colonel Stowe was called to active duty as Captain in the Air Corps on 15 October 1940, reporting to March Field, California. He served as Adjutant and S-1 of the 4th Air Force Base Command at Riverside, California until December 1941 when he attended Command and Staff school at Leavenworth, Kansas, when he returned to Riverside and was assigned to 4th Air Force Base Command with Headquarters at San Francisco, California. Then followed a period of DS with the U.S. Navy. Was appointed to the General Staff Corps, Headquarters, 4th Air Force, San Francisco, California.

Lt Colonel Stowe reported to Headquarters M.T.O on 23 July 1944 and was subsequently assigned to the 464th Bomb Group, as Group Executive Officer.

Lt Colonel Stowe is 40 years of age, married, with a son age 7 and a daughter age 9, he claims Anadarko, Oklahoma as his home town.

2. Captain Myron E. Mershon, O-664218, Operation Officer of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H), entered the Army as a flying Cadet on 22 January 1942. Primary training was taken at Vernon, Texas, Basic at Randolph Field, Texas and Advanced at Moore Field, Texas. He was commissioned 2nd Lt. AC on 6 September 1942.

Captain Mershon served as Basic flying instructor at Perrin and Greenville Fields, Texas. After taking B-17 transition at Lockbourne Field, Columbus, Ohio, Captain Mershon served as B-17 pilot instructor at Rapid City, South Dakota 19 November 1943 when he joined the 464th Bombardment Group (H) as Assistant Operations Officer of the 776th Bombardment Squadron (H).

As he had never flown a B-24 A/C before, Captain Mershon took B-24 Standardization Course at Colorado Springs, shortly after joining the Group.

Coming overseas with the Group, Captain Mershon has flown 41 combat missions as of 31 August 1944.

Age 22, single and claiming Tucson, Arizona as his home town, Captain Mershon intends to return to the University of Arizona to finish his course in Mining Engineering, which was interrupted by the war.

3. Captain Albert E. Stell Jr., O-25654, Operations Officer of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H), entered West Point as a Cadet on 1 July 1939 and graduated 19 January 1943, receiving his commission as 2nd Lt, AC, the first class of West Point to graduate Officers directly into the Air Corps. Primary training was taken at Visalia, Basic at Merced and Advanced at Merced, California.

After graduating Captain Stell took B-26 transition at Del Rio, Texas, and was assigned to the 398th Bombardment Squadron of the 21st Bombardment Group (M) at McDill Field, Florida as Assistant Operations Officer.

After taking B-24 transition at Fort Worth, Texas, Captain Stell was assigned as instructor pilot with the 29th Bombardment Group (H) at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho where he served until joining the 464th Bombardment Group (H) as Operations Officer of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H).

Coming overseas with the Group, Captain Stell was appointed Operations Officer of the 777th Bombardment Squadron (H) on 14 June 1944. As of 31 August 1944 Captain Stell had flown 21 combat missions.

Captain Stell is 23 years of age, single and his home town is Pasadena, California. Captain Stell intends to continue the Army as his career after the war.

4. Captain George W. Carney Jr., O-662743, Operations Officer of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H), entered the Army as a flying cadet on 10 November 1941, taking Pre-Flight training at Kelly Field, Texas, Primary training at Tulsa, Oklahoma, Basic at San Angelo, Texas, and Advanced at Lubbock, Texas. He was commissioned a 2nd Lt on 5 August 1942.

After serving as a co-pilot in B-17 Groups at Spokane, and Walla Walla, Washington, Rapid City, South Dakota, Pocatello, Idaho and Peyote, Texas, was checked out as first pilot at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho.

Captain Carney served as pilot instructor in both B-17 and B-24 A/C at Gowen Field until joining the 464th Bombardment Group (H) on 26 August 1943, as Operations Officer of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

Captain Carney completed phase training and came overseas with the Group and as of 31 August 1944 had flown 33 combat missions.

Captain Carney is 24 years of age, married and his home town is Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he was attending Oklahoma A & M at the time of his enlistment. Commercial aviation is a field Captain Carney intends to enter after the war.

5. Captain William G. Shoemaker, O-789213, Operations Officer of the 779th Bombardment Squadron (H), entered the Army as a flying cadet on 10 July 1941, taking Primary training at Pine Bluffs, Arkansas, Basic at Augusta, Georgia and Advanced at Turner Field, Albany, Georgia. He was commissioned a 2nd Lt, AC on 29 April 1942.

Captain Shoemaker was assigned to anti-submarine patrol work and served at Mitchell Field, New York, Opelika, Florida, New Orleans, Louisiana and Galveston, Texas. During this period of service extending from May 1942 until October 1943, Captain Shoemaker flew patrol missions in B-34, B-25, and A-29 aircraft over the Atlantic and Gulf areas.

Joining the 464th Bombardment Group (H) on 11 November 1943, Captain Shoemaker came overseas with the Group and as of 31 August 1944 had flown 39 combat missions. The crew of Captain Shoemaker is the only one of ten (10 originally joining the Group from the anti-submarine patrol which is still intact, all of them having completed their fifty (50) missions during the month of August 1944.

A graduate of Cornell University, holding a degree in Mechanical and Administrative Engineering, Captain Shoemaker is twenty five (25) years of age, married with a baby daughter age 1½ months whom he has never seen.

Captain Showmaker claims Kennett Square, Pennsylvania as his home town, and intends to enter commercial aviation after the war.

Promotions

1. John W. Nance, O-790704 to Major S.O. 230 Par. 17-Hq 15 AF 17 August 1944 Assistant Group Operations Officer.
2. Wyle Spiller Jr., O-430026 to Major S.O. 237 Par. 19, Hq 15 AF 24 August 1944 Group Navigator