

2ND EMERGENCY RESCUE SQUADRON

SQUADRON HISTORY

1 November 1944 to 30 November, inclusive

During the month of November there occurred a number of events that caused the squadron to change its policy accordingly.

The Thirteenth Air Force organized the 5230th Composite Emergency Rescue Group (Prov) and this squadron was attached to it for tactical operational control. The personnel assigned to this group were assigned to the squadron and placed on Temporary Duty with the group. This transfer of personnel in duty status to the group left several of the more important positions in the squadron open for new men. A new Squadron Commander, four flight commanders and senior flight surgeon were assigned duty. This did not, however, affect the job at hand and work continued in an efficient manner.

Maintenance work during this period reached a new high. Engine changes were completed on all ships in addition to general repair work. Especially busy during November were the Sheet Metal Workers. Moving steadily northward in operations was bringing the ships more and more into contact with the Japanese Defenses. Several of the planes returned to their base with scars from enemy flak and guns. Air Raids at Morotai were responsible for the complete destruction of one plane and others were damaged by falling shrapnel. Also, continuous water landings were weakening the hulls of the ships and these had to be checked after every mission to insure the safety of the crews.

Contact was established with the Philippine Guerrilla forces at this time and a plan was put into effect whereby any men landing to the Islands would be harbored from the Japanese and transferred to designated pick-up stations where one of our ships would land for them. Our missions at this time were over the Philippines so these stations could be crossed without affecting the scheduled mission.

On 2 November we were attached to the 5230th Composite Emergency Rescue Group (Prov) per General Order #115, Headquarters Thirteenth Air Force, dated 25 October 1944. 3 November, Major Benjamin B. Mathis, ASN O-412178, assumed command of the squadron during the absence of Major Lewis who was placed on Temporary Duty at

Sidney, Australia. On the 16 November, Major Lewis, upon his return, was placed on Temporary Duty with the 5230th Group. On the 18 November, Major Mathis was transferred To the 155th Station Hospital and Captain Gerard F. Wientjes, ASN O-374107, assumed command of the organization. Major Mathis returned from the hospital on the 25 November and resumed command. On the night of the 25th, ship 44-33875 was destroyed by a direct hit during an air raid.

The total gain in personnel during this period was 12 Officers and 20 Enlisted Men. The Squadron strength stood at 70 Officers and 246 Enlisted Men. Thirty Three (33) men were attached for rations only.

A total of 104 missions totaling 965:15 hours were flown and rescues were made as follows:

- 2 November - rescued 1 pilot in life raft off southern tip of Kaboeroeang Is.
- 5 November - rescued fighter pilot in open sea landing.
- 8 November - picked up 8 members B-24 crew at Murcielagos Bay. Natives said there would be 5 more later.
- 12 November - picked up the 5 men at Murcielagos Bay.
- 13 November - rescued 1 pilot at Ceram and 1 Pilot at Southern Celebes.
- 18 November - rescued 3 men at Negros Is. rescued 1 man in Sangibe Is group
- 19 November - rescued fighter pilot at Biaro Is.
- 22 November - picked up 3 natives at Misool village. rescued 13 men on strike at Bayliinango.
- 23 November - rescued 4 members B-25 crew, open sea.
- 24 November - rescued 3 fighter pilots, open sea.
- 28 November - picked up 4 men in Philippines.
- 30 November - rescued 6 members C-47 crew in Philippines.