

Arnold and the War Department had complete confidence in it; that its reputation was widely known throughout the United States; and that it was the only Group in the Southwest Pacific which had participated continuously in combat. On the 30th, the Group was honored by a visit from Lord Gowrie, Governor General of Australia. He expressed his gratitude to the Third Group for its efforts in the defense of Australia.

Right at the end of June combat crews were increased to 8 for the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and to 20 for each of the Bomb Squadrons per letter dated 29 June 1942, Headquarters, U.S. Army Air Services Southwest Pacific Area. The announced purpose was to provide two combat crews for each flyable combat plane thus allowing more leisure for combat personnel. The estimate of crews required was based on the assumption that a continuing two-thirds of the planes assigned would be in flyable condition.

About the first part of JULY 1942 the Group Commander advised higher headquarters that combat personnel could not find adequate diversion about the little town of Charters Towers to break the strain and monotony of combat routine and requested permission to send crews to Brisbane for rest and recreation. Permission was not granted. Consequently a rest camp, "Duck Camp" was set up for combat crews about 15 miles out of Charters Towers. It provided "a place to hunt, fish, and generally relax." A few officers were granted leaves in July and in the months following, but not in substantial numbers until October. The Diary (July) states "but a short time later furloughs were granted to all members of the Group." Also during this month a request for a small bi-motored cargo



