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SW. PACIFIC

MAJ. D.P. HALL NAMED GROUP COMMANDER

MAJOR LARNER AND SIX OTHERS BURIED IN THE AMERICAN CEMETERY

Funeral services were held in the American Cemetery Saturday morning for Maj. Edward L. Larner and six officers and men killed with him in the crash of a medium bomber as they started to land at an advanced base Friday. An eighth victim of the accident was Capt. John W. White, an intelligence officer for the Australian Imperial Forces.

The others were: Lt. Frederick H. Ensminger, co-pilot, who was on his first mission; Lt. John J. Clarke, navigator; S/Sgt. Columbus G. Pelham, radio operator; S/Sgt. Vernon Moore, gunner; Sgt. Robert L. Fecitt, crew chief, and Sgt. Berj Manuelian, crew chief.

The services were conducted by Chaplain James and Chaplain Quest. Four ranks of officers and men saluted as each of the seven caskets, covered by American flags, was carried from trucks to the graves. There were 12 pallbearers. At the conclusion of the service, a squad fired three volleys, which echoed through the hills and valleys surrounding the cemetery.

(Detailed story on Maj. Larner's career on Page 3).

GI'S FORM ORCHESTRA, HOLD JIVE SESSION IN 89th's CLUB LAKANUKE

By Sgt. Peter P. Flanjak

Several GI's in the 89th who have their own instruments got together and with the assistance of a talented pianist, organized themselves into a small orchestra. They were really hot the other night at Club Lakanuke.

The audience requested some jive numbers, got them and really were put in the groove. The whole club rang with noise and laughter.

Capt. Glen W. Clark, our C.O., has returned from a brief leave to resume his duties, relieving Capt. Donald E. Good, temporarily in charge.

The time of the Saint's news broadcast over the PA system has been changed from 5:15 to 5:45 each evening.

SUCCEEDS LT. COL. STRICKLAND; HOLDS BOTH SILVER STAR AND DFC

Maj. Donald P. Hall has been named group commander, succeeding Lt. Col. Robert F. Strickland, who has been transferred to another station after almost 10 years of service with 3rd Group. Maj. Hall was assistant group operations officer.

Col. Strickland, then a First Lieutenant, was in command of 3rd Group when it came overseas. In March, 1942, Col. John H. Davies took command. Then Col. Strickland became C.O. again last October.

Maj. Hall holds the DFC for completing 200 hours of operational flights and the Silver Star for gallantry in action in New Guinea last September. He led a large formation of light bombers in an attack on a heavily-defended enemy airdrome. He accounted for five of 17 aircraft destroyed on the ground and aided in destroying two ack-ack positions. He led many successful attacks in New Guinea.

He received his commission as Second Lieutenant in the Infantry Reserve in September, 1934, later transferring to the Field Artillery. He dropped his commission in 1939 to enter flying school and graduated in May, 1940. He became a First Lieutenant in November, 1941, a Captain last July and a Major last Sept. 21.

Col. Strickland received the DSC for extraordinary heroism on the Philippine Islands mission April 10 to 14, 1942. He led a flight of bombers on a long journey from Australia to the Philippines after which several successful bombing attacks were made on enemy transports, shore installations and troops.

Farewell parties in honor of Col. Strickland were held in the enlisted men's club Monday night and in the Fat Cats Club Sunday night. The enlisted men's party was a big fish fry. Col. Strickland thanked the men for the important help they had given him. Toasts were drunk to him. Later he visited all departments to say goodbye.

THIRD STRIKE

Newspaper published every Wednesday and Saturday by and for members of the 3rd Bombardment Gp., APO 929. Lt. Col. Robert F. Strickland, Group Commander; Maj. Irvine H. Shearer, Group Intelligence Officer. Third Strike receives Material supplied by Camp Newspaper Service, War Department.

Contributors: Cpl. Byron Edgett, Sgt. Peter Flanjak, Sgt. Roland Guillet, T/5 Albert Lehr, Cpl. Edmond Lewis, Cpl. Harold Larsen, Cpl. Clifford Cotter, Sgt. George Hall, "Pappy" Ayer, S/Sgt. J.N. Wammoth, Sgt. Bill Swain, T/Sgt. R. Davis. Adviser: Lt. Selwyn Pepper.

8TH POINTS WITH PRIDE TO DEEDS OF ITS MEN

By Sgt. Bill Swain

"Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might" fits these 8th Squadron boys to a "T". They might not be as big heroes as Buzz Wagner or Colin Kelly or the rest, but nevertheless they are to us heroes, who did a damn good job in the earlier stage of this war game.

Some of them saw action in P.I., Java and New Guinea. Life to them was something which they risked in many ways.

For their deeds they were awarded the following medals: To Capt. Robert G. Oestreicher, for his outstanding heroism and deeds in action with the enemy over Australia, the D.S.C. We might also add for his marksmanship, one certain M/B and one probable later confirmed. He was recently promoted to the rank of Captain.

The boys who were decorated with Silver Stars: S/Sgts. Stevens, Simpson, Lennon, Worden, Bryning, Thornock, Kidd and also T/Sgt. Larronde. These boys received their rewards for their work as gunners against the enemy in those dear old A-24's when they took the "rule of the skies over New Guinea" from the Japs.

To T/Sgt. Warrington, Sgts. DeRosa and Clowing, for entering a wrecked B26 and unloading the bombs when the fuses were set so that a slight jar would send all three of these boys to their Maker. Also awards went to Sgt. H.L. White and Sgts. Gunn and Hines for entering a burning B25 and saving one life and tearing the shells from the plane to save the lives of numerous people in the near vicinity. Shells were exploding from the heat inside the plane. For these deeds these men received the Soldier's Medal.

These are our heroes. They have set an example for the rest of us to follow.

MAJOR EDWARD L. LARNER

A Tribute By Lt. G.K. McCoun

"The faint far whisper of forgotten songs floating over the breeze..Youth.. Strength..Aspirations..Struggles..Triumphs..Despairs..Movements..Vividness.. Radiance..Shadows..Faint bugles sounding reveille..Far drums beating the long roll..The crash and thunder of guns..The rattle of machine guns firing forward.. The still white cross..(Gen. MacArthur's address to the Unknown Soldier).

The Squadron's estimate of him will not be founded upon any one mission or battle. The time may come when the memory of the skies of the Bismarck Sea and New Guinea shall be dimmed by the darkness of revolving years.

But even then the enduring strength, the patriotic self-denial, and the unsurpassed combat ability of this American soldier will always stand forth in undimmed radiance—in his youth and strength, his love and loyalty to duty, he gave all that mortality can give: The supreme sacrifice.

He needs no eulogy. He has written his own history for the 3rd Bombardment Group, and for his country, and has written it in the breasts of his enemy. But when I think of his acquiescence under opposition, of his courage and coolness under fire, and his modesty in success, I am filled with emotion.

Yes, he belongs to history and he belongs to future generations. But by his glory, by his courage, and by his achievements, he belongs to the 90th Squadron.

HIT TUNES OF THE WEEK

1. I've Heard That Song Before.
2. As Time Goes By.
3. That Old Black Magic.
4. Don't Get Around Much Anymore.
5. Brazil.
6. You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To.
7. Would It Be Wrong.
8. For Me and My Gal.
9. There's A Harbor of Dreamboats.
10. Taking A Chance on Love.

WINS ANN SHERIDAN'S SWEATER

Toronto—Leading Aircraftsman J.C. Baxter of Toronto, presented with a sweater worn by film actress Ann Sheridan for leading his class at a Royal Canadian Air Force Air observers' school said: "Gosh, I hope this fits my wife."

MAJ. LARNER - FEARLESS LEADER, CRACK PILOT

Maj. Edward L. Lerner, killed in an accident Friday, was one of the outstanding combat pilots of the Army Air Forces. Both Gen. Henry H. Arnold, commander of U.S. air forces, and Lt. Gen. George C. Kenney, commander of Allied Air Forces in the Southwest Pacific, had singled him out for high praise.

Addressing a graduating class at Randolph Field a few months ago, Gen. Arnold said of Maj. Lerner, "That pilot never heard the word 'quit.'"

Barrel-chested, cocky Maj. Lerner personally led his squadron on every mission. He tore into enemy anti-aircraft positions fearlessly. On one occasion his plane was holed after dropping frag bombs. Spotting a concentration of Jap troops, he flew back got another plane and returned to the scene to strafe scores of Japs.

He wore a "beat-up" service cap pushed back on his head. His shirt invariably was unbuttoned almost to his waist. He was easy to talk to, the kind of leader who set an example for his squadron and the whole group. He had little patience with crew members who asked to be relieved of combat duty.

SANK CRUISER AND TRANSPORT

In the recent Battle of the Bismarck Sea, Maj. Lerner was credited with sinking a Jap cruiser and a transport. For that accomplishment, he was recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross. He led a flight of Mitchells in an attack on the convoy, which at that moment consisted of two cruisers, six destroyers and 12 cargo vessels and transports. The transport sank immediately after it was hit by Maj. Lerner and the cruiser sank in 20 minutes. The entire Jap convoy of 22 ships was wiped out.

As he dived on the concentration of ships, Maj. Lerner noticed that other bombers in his flight were aiming for the same target. "Get the hell off my target," he shouted over the radio, "get your own ships; this one's mine."

Maj. Lerner, then a Captain, received the Silver Star for gallantry in action Nov. 10, 1942. He was the pilot of a light bomber at that time.

The citation related that after dropping parachute frag bombs from a very low altitude on two ack-ack positions, a heavy burst of anti-aircraft fire caused the tail section of the plane to become perpendicular with the ground. The plane sheared off tree tops for a considerable distance before con-

GAVE PLANE WIFE'S PET NAME

Maj. Lerner gave his wife's pet name, Spook, to his plane. His wife and two daughters live in Roswell, N.M. His home was in San Francisco.

Control was recovered. Despite damage to the plane, Capt. Lerner returned to the attack, making a strafing pass at the enemy's position. His skill, courage and determination to press the attack against the enemy despite such odds were in accord with the finest traditions of the Air Corps, the citation said.

26 YEARS OLD

He was also recommended for the Oak Leaf cluster for a similar attack on another enemy ack-ack position.

Since October, 1942, when he joined 3rd Group, he had been on 39 missions. He was 26 years old.

An Army pilot for four years, he held a commission in the cavalry reserve before being sent to flying school. He received his training at Glendale, Cal., and at Kelly Field and Randolph. Before entering the service, he attended New Mexico Military Institute at Roswell in 1938 and the University of New Mexico for a brief period. He played football there.

Lt. Clarke, who had been on more than 25 missions, was recommended for the DFC for his part in the Bismarck Sea battle. He was squadron navigator and mess officer. Before entering the service, he was a priority coordinator for the Metallizing Engineering Co., Long Island, N.Y. He was trained at the advanced navigation school at Turner Field, Albany, Ga. He was 27.

Sgt. Moore, 21, had been on seven missions as an upper gunner. Sgt. Pecitt, recently promoted from Corporal, was a shipping clerk before he entered the Army. He was trained by the Army at the Casey Jones Aeronautics School in New Jersey. He was 23.

PEARSON MENTIONED ON RADIO SHOW

On an international broadcast, the "Hi, Neighbor" show from San Francisco, the name of Warrant Officer Joe G. Pearson of the 89th was mentioned several times recently. Pearson's relatives and friends in Shreveport, La., wrote that they had heard the broadcast and sent him greetings.

Sgt. Scherer Scolds Furniture Manufacturers

Recently there appeared in Third Strike an item in which it was stated that a group of convening furniture manufacturers anticipated a huge post-war demand for single beds due to the fact that soldiers would be "used to sleeping alone."

This so incensed the author that he had an uncontrollable urge to strike something. The first thing to strike his eye was a typewriter; he attacked with a terrible ferocity. Here is the result:

Men, I honor your sincerity
And doubt not your intention
But tell me, were you all on dope
At your lately held convention?

Was it coke or marijuana?
That caused you guys to say
That a soldier likes to solo
When each night he hits the hay.

We'll admit that we don't get much
But spare us the humility
Of the slightest implication
That we've lost our proud virility.

Why, man, there are those among us
Who have nothing else in mind
Than to test out their endurance
On the first cute blonde they find.

We're used to crowding in a plane
And cramming in a jeep,
But a bed's a different matter--
And we DON'T go there to sleep.

So, buddy, take this good advice
And tell your Corporation
That a soldier likes a lot of room
For an offensive operation.

---SGT. W.M. SCHERER

89th WARRIORS STATION HOSPITAL, 13-0, IN SOFTBALL LEAGUE GAME

By Sgt. George J. Hall

The 89th softball team, making its debut in the New Guinea League, batted its way to a convincing win over the Station Hospital team Sunday. Because of a league ruling, the game ended in the first half of the fourth inning, the score being 13-0 in favor of the 89th.

Features of the game were two home runs by Al Foreman, three two-baggers by Duke Ellerbee. Lefty Bodnar also contributed three hits. Cotton Sorenson allowed only one hit.

"SGT. YORK" BAIRD OUTSHOTS "WHISKY" TAYLOR IN BIG MATCH

By Sgt. Roland Guillet

Against the picturesque setting of majestic hills that rise like giant sentinels guarding the countryside, the shooting match of the century took place Saturday morning between M/Sgt. (Sgt. York) Baird and T/Sgt. (Whisky) Taylor of the 13th Squadron.

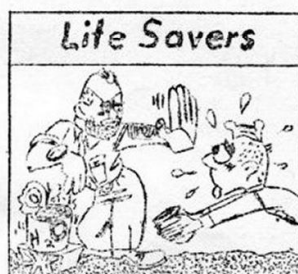
The range was 225 yards, the target 18 by 24 inches with a bull's eye of 8 inches. Shooting was done from the standing, sitting and prone positions, each contestant shooting five rounds from each position.

Baird was proclaimed champ when he won in a walkaway by shooting 12 bulls' eyes out of 15, to 6 for Taylor, and he scored 42 points out of 45 to Taylor's 28.

There was much weeping and gnashing of teeth and much rejoicing as the boys collected their money that had been bet on the match. A TOTAL OF 225 POUNDS OF HARD CASH WAS BET ON THE OUTCOME.

SOFTBALL LEAGUE STARTS IN 13th

The 13th Departmental Softball League opened Saturday. Pencil Pushers beat the Combat Crews, 6-5. Ordnance won over Maintenance, 3-2. Fine fielding featured the game.



When orders have been issued that all drinking water must be boiled, be sure that the water you drink has been boiled for 20 minutes and not merely heated a little.

* * * *



When on field duty never drink from a stream, spring, well or faucet unless a sign has been posted that the water is safe to drink.