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Authority: E.O. 13526

By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

PATROL BOMBING SQUADRON SEVENTY-ONE
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

WAR DIARY

For Period

September 1, 1945

to

30 September, 1945

Original to: CominCh
Copies to : CinCPac
ComAirPac
ComAirPhilSeaFron
ComFAirWing TEN
Squadron Files

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WAR DIARY

September 1, 1945 to September 30, 1945

1. Designation of Unit: Patrol Bombing Squadron SEVENTY-ONE.
2. Composition of Unit: 12 PBV-6A's.
18 Crews.
3. Next Higher Echelons: Aircraft, Philippine Sea Frontier
(Task Group 93.3, Rear Admiral
F. D. WAGNER, USN).
Fleet Air Wing TEN
(Task Group 93.3.5, Captain
J. C. RENARD, USN).
4. Operations Plan: Commander Aircraft, Philippine Sea
Frontier Operations Plan No. 1-45.
5. Location: Naval Air Base, Samar, Philippine
Islands.
6. Time Zone: Minus 9.
7. Operations of Unit:

In the first full month of post-war operations, Patrol Bombing Squadron SEVENTY-ONE continued air-sea rescue, search, and weather reconnaissance operations in the central Philippines area. A standby alert plane was maintained at all times at Samar ready to answer emergency calls. Six flights were made for the purpose of evacuating sick and wounded persons from outlying points in the central Philippines area.

PBV-6A's having been found unsuitable for weather reconnaissance in this area, a detachment of six PB4Y-2 (Privateer) aircraft and a like number of crews from Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED SIX was placed under the operational control of the Commanding Officer, Patrol Bombing Squadron SEVENTY-ONE for this purpose. They reported for duty at Samar on 10 September and on 24 September were relieved by a similar detachment from Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN.

The VPB-71 detachment of five crews and five aircraft which had been established at Sangley Point in August continued to execute a wide variety of missions including anti-submarine patrols, lost plane searches, transportation flights, and aerial surveys. A mission of unusual interest and importance was carried out on 6 September when two planes piloted by Lieutenant Norman F. BOCKELMAN, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Edmund J. HILLESON, USNR, flew several Navy medical officers and corpsmen to Formosa with medical

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supplies for Allied prisoners of war. The planes landed at Matsuyama airfield on the northern part of the island where, after some preliminary difficulties with the Japanese authorities who had not yet surrendered, had received no advance notice of the mission, and whose initial attitude was sullen and hostile, arrangements were finally made for the medical party to go to the nearby prison camp. Two more planes piloted by Lieutenant Orville A. WITHEE, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Joseph N. EVANS, USNR arrived the following day with additional medical supplies and all four planes returned to their Sangley Point base on 8 September.

The detachment of two crews and two aircraft established in August at Puerto Princesa, Palawan was maintained throughout the month of September for Air-Sea Rescue duty.

During September nine replacement crews reported on board, thus relieving the last remaining crews of the original squadron. By COMAIRPAC's S/L-140324 dated 18 September 1945 the squadron's personnel complement was reduced to fifteen flight crews. In the first four days of the month a total of five new PBV-6A's was delivered to the squadron by replacement crews. This completed the replacement of the squadron's over-age aircraft and filled the new complement of twelve planes.

The principal missions flown during the period, exclusive of routine patrol and weather flights, were as follows:

- September 1 Lieutenant (jg) John M. KERN, USNR, located and tracked a tropical storm two hundred miles east of the northern tip of Luzon. In his investigation of the storm, he penetrated into the center of the disturbance and returned to base by climbing above the strata of violent winds.
- September 1 Lieutenant Michel G. EMMANUEL, USNR, conducted a special search for a missing B-29 due north of Samar and east of Luzon. Results were negative.
- September 6 Lieutenant Norman F. BOCKELMAN, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Edmund J. HILLESON, USNR, flew Medical Corps personnel and medical supplies to Matsuyama, Formosa for the relief of Allied prisoners of war. Lieutenant Commander Lloyd L. DeLATOURE, USN, flew a special mission ordered by CTG 93.3 to evacuate an emergency appendicitis case from the USS JAMES MADISON at a point about fifty miles east of Davao Gulf, Mindanao. Upon reaching the ship's position and establishing radio contact, he was informed that the patients condition had improved to such an extent that air evacuation would not be necessary.

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- September 7 Lieutenant Orville A. WITHEE, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Joseph N. EVANS, USNR, carried additional medical supplies from Sangley Point to Matsuyama.
- Lieutenant Commander Joseph M. CORCORAN, USNR, and Lieutenant Commander Robert E. FLOOD, USNR flew a special weather reconnaissance mission to locate the center of a tropical disturbance and track the path of the storm.
- September 8 Lieutenant Morris E. HALLER, USN, departed for Okinawa to provide Dumbo coverage for a flight of fifteen carrier-type aircraft enroute.
- September 9 Lieutenant Commander Victor A. BLANDIN, USN, landed at Calbayog, Samar under orders to evacuate a litter patient. A rough sea, which resulted in the plane taking water aboard, made it necessary to take off and return to base without completing the mission when the patient had not been brought out after a wait of forty minutes.
- September 10 Lieutenant Commander Joseph M. CORCORAN, USNR, evacuated one stretcher case from Calbayog, Samar. Lieutenant (jg) HEBBLER, USNR, took off from Puerto Princesa, Palawan in an attempt to get aerial pictures of a JRB which had crashed on northern Mindoro. He was prevented from doing so by weather conditions and was forced to land at McGuire Field, Mindoro.
- September 11 Lieutenant Commander Robert E. FLOOD, USNR, evacuated four walking patients from Catbalogan, Samar. He then searched the area of the Biliran Islands for a missing transport plane (C-46). The results of this search were negative. Lieutenant (jg) Charles E. HEBBLER, USNR, made a second attempt to photograph the crashed JRB on northern Mindoro and again was unable to secure pictures because of weather conditions.
- September 12 Lieutenant William D. HUGHES, USNR, searched from Palawan for a B-25 reported missing near Manila. A bubbling oil slick was found but no evidence of debris or survivors.
- September 14 Lieutenant (jg) Thelmer P. SMITH, USNR, searched for a missing plane. At a position 180 miles distant and bearing 140 degrees true from Tacloban he sighted objects which appeared to be two wing tanks and a number of yellow boxes scattered within a radius of twenty miles of the tanks.

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- September 19 Lieutenant Commander Victor A. BLANDIN, USN, Lieutenant (jg) Thelmer P. SMITH, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Robert B. WILSON, USNR, searched in the following areas respectively for two TBM aircraft reported overdue from Peleliu to Samar; 09-26 North, 130-00 East; 09-26 North, 129-00 East; and Camotes Sea. Results were negative.
- September 21 Lieutenant William D. HUGHES, USNR, continued the search for the two missing TBM's from his base at Palawan. Results were again negative.
- September 26 Lieutenant (jg) Robert E. STICKER, USNR, evacuated an appendicitis patient from the merchant ship JAMES MCKAY near Homonhon Island. Lieutenant William D. HUGHES, USNR, searched from Palawan for a TBM reported missing in the vicinity of Panay Island with negative results. Lieutenant (jg) Charles E. HEBBLER, USNR, conducted a negative search from Palawan to Bohol, southern Cebu, and southern Negros for a TBM reported missing in that vicinity.
- September 27 Lieutenant Morris E. HALLER, USN, Flew a special mission to the northern tip of Mindoro to return three members of the crew of a crashed TBM to Samar. The plane was one of the two reported overdue from Peleliu on 19 September 1945. Lieutenant (jg) Thelmer P. SMITH, USNR, flew a special search in the Leyte-Samar area for an overdue salvage boat. Results negative. Lieutenant William D. HUGHES, USNR, taking off from Palawan, searched Negros, Cebu and Panay areas for a missing TBM. Negative results.
- September 29 Lieutenant William D. HUGHES, USNR, searched in the vicinity of Negros Island for a missing TBM. The search was negative.

SORTIES

<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
Special Transportation	38	158.5
Squadron Transportation	20	57.7
Dumbo Searches	15	40.8
Day Searches	51	273.5
Weather Reconnaissance	20	122.1
Test Flights	7	6.7
TOTAL FOR MONTH	151	659.3
TOTAL THIS CRUISE	3293	17120.5

APPROVED:

William L. Kauber
WILLIAM L. KAUBER
Lieut-Comdr., U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer

SUBMITTED:

Ward Macfadden
WARD MACFADDEN
Lieut-Comdr., USNR
ACI Officer