

450TH CITATION

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450th gunners engaged the fighters in a savage air battle, drove them off while the formation proceeded to the IP. As it turned for the target, and prepared for the bomb run, hundreds of Ploesti flak guns opened up with an accurate barrage, and the Luftwaffe, reinforced, attacked again. More than 100 ME 109s and JU 88s were firing rockets and passing viciously into the formation saying "bombs away."

Even after the bombers left the target area, Gotha's yellow noses kept coming in, and the battle raged for 25 minutes. 450th gunners were credited with the destruction of 27 enemy fighters in the course of this historic mission. Five Cottontail bombers were lost, and 19 badly damaged.

Subsequent photo reconnaissance revealed that "enormous destruction and irreparable damage to the rail road installation and marshalling yards" had been inflicted on the target despite the Luftwaffe's attempt to break up the attack, and despite the heavy flak barrage and the obscuring of the target with smoke pots.

The citation commends all officers and men of the group for "heroic determination and combat efficiency." The first Distinguished Unit Citation awarded to the 450th was for outstanding leadership on a mission to Regensburg, Germany, February 25th 1944.

KNEE ACTION

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The Liberator finally approached its home base-then things began to happen. The reaction of the plane to control movement was now opposite to that which Lt. Mark had first encountered.

This time he had to stand up and lean on the control wheel to keep the plane from burying itself in the hard ground.

On landing, he found out too late that his right landing gear hydraulic system had been punctured, rendering his right brake useless. Fearing that too much pressure on his left brake would cause the plane to go into a dangerous ground loop, he used his rudder to make up for the loss of his engine which had been knocked out by flak.

As soon as the wheels touched the ground, the tire rim spun loose and shot out along the landing strip, but Lt. Mark maneuvered the plane to the edge of the runway where it finally stopped.

Outside of the 114 flak holes, one engine of the hydraulic system inoperative, the communication system out, part of the trim tab controls damaged, a holed flap, a punctured tire and only one brake, Lt. Mark's Liberator was in perfect condition.

WHO'S WHO

S/Sgt. Norbert J. Schweighardt, of Holis, New Jersey, now a nose gunner in the 722nd Squadron, is an old army man. Although he is only 27 years of age, seven years of his life has been spent in the U. S. Army. Sgt. Schweighardt enlisted in the army at the age of eighteen years, going into the Coast Artillery Anti-Aircraft. He was stationed at Fort Totten, New York for a short while and then sent to Fort Randolph, Panama Canal Zone, where he remained for a period of three years. Most of his time in the Canal Zone was spent in training and assisting generally in preparing the Canal Zone for defense. There were about 18,000 to 20,000 soldiers there in the peace time army and a great number of these men were engaged in installing gun emplacements throughout the Isthmus, especially around the shores of Gatun Lake. Sgt. Schweighardt was a gun commander in charge of some eighteen to twenty men. At that time, he was a buck sergeant. Most of the time, his wife was living with him in the Canal Zone. Living

conditions for a soldier and his family in the Canal Zone are very good reports Sgt. Schweighardt, however, the life of a civilian is a rather difficult one.

In May, 1941, Sgt. Schweighardt was returned to the United States for a discharge. For the better part of the next two years he was employed by the Government in the internal security department and spent most of his time in checking on and investigating defense plant guards. In June, 1943, Sgt. Schweighardt was drafted and again placed in the Coast Artillery Anti-Aircraft. This time he was stationed at Camp Stewart, assigned to 40 mm. guns. He applied for and was transferred to the Air Corps at Miami Beach, Florida for Cadet examination but was washed out when the Army eliminated 30,000 prospective Cadets at one cut. He remained in the Air Corps, attended the Armament School at Lowry Field, Colorado and the Kingman, Arizona, Aerial Gunnery School. He joined the 450th in November, 1944. He has flown on fifteen combat missions.

The Lecherous Leech From Lecce

Enlisted Mens' Club is a meek name for the new club in Lecce which features the Italian version of Maisie the blonde. She goes through a brutal routine nightly in the G. I. hot spot, making the G. I.s yell "moider"---and sometimes their actions speak louder than words.

Maisie comes from Milan, she tells us, and sings nightly with an eight piece orchestra which furnishes some fair music for the EM club. Coming into the club, one gets the impression that it's just a run-of-the-mill G. I. joint, but when roving eyes hit the band stand, they quickly shift to and stay on the vivacious figure of "Maisie the Eytie" who is singing "I'm dreaming of a White Xmas in an Italian accented American. The boys can't hear much of her singing, but her undulations and teasing more than repay the G. I.s who are foaming at the mouth in anticipation of coming events.

Maisie is 5 ft 2, eyes not blue, but can she, can she coo! The boys in Brooklyn would call her a nice "shtickel fleisch" or just plain "zaftig." Her routine is mostly wiggling contortions and snaky twists comparable to hootchie kootchie dancers of roadside carnivals Her big black eyes roll from one G. I. to another and when they spot a wolf she turns and shakes an insinuating aft in his face. His friends carry out the thwarted G. I.

Maisie keeps herself very busy during the intermission. She flirts from one table to another making eyes and displaying her ample wares to the highest bidder. No one seems to know if she has ever accepted their liberal offers, but she wears a luxurious fur coat---and all we know is that little squirrels use their tail to cover their back.

ON THE LINE

In the past, difficulty has been experienced with the 65 percent return throttle spring. It has been breaking probably as a result of the fatigue of the metal due to vibration, or the concentration of stress around an improper radius of bend at the spring attaching loop. More precaution should be taken when removing and installing the spring. Do not cut or bruise the metal with long nose pliers or side-cutting diagonals. The loop formed on the spring should have as near an equal radius as possible. No attempt should be made to improve the shape of the loop by service personnel, as this requires annealing and hardening after careful forming.

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When baffles break loose in the intercooler outlet duct, the duct may be repaired as follows:

Remove the baffles in the intercooler outlet duct by drilling out the attaching rivets and remove spot welds by using a right angle air drill with a 3/16 inch drill cut down in length if necessary, being careful not to drill through the duct. If a hole is drilled through the duct, seal it by using AN 442A rivets. Also seal the rivet holes by using this type of rivet.

This method may also be used to repair failure of deflectors and rivets loose in the carburetor air inlet scoop, Part No. 32P1350. Removal of vanes in air is necessary.

By M-Sgt. Stephen Radkoff

SCANDAL IN CANP

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none surpass the events that took place in the room of a certain Captain that memorable morning.

Our hero was buried in the depths of peaceful slumber when he was abruptly awakened by a frustrated *signorina* sitting on the edge of his cot, clad only in her pink slip. Incredulous of the sight he saw the Captain rubbed his eyes trying to erase what he thought was a bad dream. Unsuccessful in the attempt, he quickly pulled the covers over his head so he could reconstruct the events of the previous evening in retrospect.

No, it wasn't possible. He had drunk a bit heavily, but he never left the base. Peering timorously over the edge of his bedding, the officer dared another glimpse, just to be certain that he wasn't seeing things! Yes, it really was a woman and she was making advances: "Bebbe," she oozed oily while reaching for the edge of his covers. "Hey, whispered the Captain cautiously, Get out of here... Get out... You've got the wrong gee... You must be in the wrong room!" The girl became more amorous and planted a kiss on the cheek of the modest officer. "Buono?" she queried anxiously. "Via... via...get the hell out a' here! Someone might see you... cut it out!" And with that, the Captain again dove under cover. From underneath he shouted, "Hey, someone with clothes on... get this babe the hell out of my room!"

About that time the men in on the hoax broke into the room and roared with laughter. Yes, it was an April Fool's joke. The *putana* was merely Corporal Maravilla of the 721st orderly room dressed in girl's clothing.

