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ITALY

War Loan Drive Plane Arrives At Base

Last week, there arrived on this field a B-24 type aircraft which was purchased by subscribers to War Bonds bought during the Sixth War Loan Drive. This plane has been assigned to the 722nd Squadron. It has flown four combat missions since arriving at the base.

The plane is the first of its kind to be sent to this base. It was made in Ypsilanti, Michigan, at the Ford Willow Run Bomber Plant, and on the forward end of the fuselage are written the names of many civilians, each of whom has purchased a 1,000.00 War Bond or more.

Although it has not been definitely ascertained, the persons whose names appear on the fuselage are presumed to be residents of Detroit, Michigan. Who knows? Members of this group who formerly resided in that city might find the name of a friend or relative on the plane. If anyone here does find such a name, that person is requested to get in touch with the Public Relations Office immediately.

Sports Activites In Limelight

Sports have taken the limelight in the 450th as Group personnel are warming up and sharpening their batting eyes while they ready themselves for the coming softball wars.

The softball league which was to begin play on the 9th of this month, was moved back to the 16th in order to allow the teams more time for practice.

The athletic field, south of the 723rd area, is being readied for the opening of the softball season. Although the ground is still rough, the Squadron athletic officers, Capt. Quillin, 720th; Capt. Kluender, 721st; Capt. Shane, 722nd and Lt. Ready, 723rd, are working hard to get their respective diamonds in shape.

Lt. Walsh, Special Services athletic mentor, announced that

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Headquarters Mess Hall Has Individual Service

Taking literally the suggestion made by Lt. Thaddeus Cylkowski, Group I and E officer, that men must prepare themselves for the strange land across the sea called the United States of America, the Group Headquarters personnel went on the first leg of their journey by instituting a new service in the group mess-hall. No longer do the EMs have to use their mess-gear. It is now plates and serving by Italian waiters in typical *burghesi* style.

Last Tuesday, when the men appeared at the mess line with their meat-cans, the cooks told them they were behind time and that now the policy was to merely bring a knife, fork and spoon and proceed to the mess-hall where the food would be brought in and the side dishes made available.

There are no table cloths as yet, but the tops have a narrow veneer finish not unlike the variety known in better American Cafe Society. The men are seated six to a table and use individual chairs instead of the usual benches.

Though the men are a bit prone to calling, "Hey, Biasco, *vieni qua!*" when they want service, there is a marked absence of "Pass the---butter." Despite the popular belief to the contrary, the men have not lost their table *savoir faire* and the usual demeanor enforced by having a senior non-com in charge of each table is unnecessary.

723rd First In Review

The 723rd Squadron was given top rating by the Group Staff in the review following the citation presentation ceremonies last Saturday. Second place was copped by the 721st Squadron.

This marks the second time in the last three formations that the 723rd has been judged the best.

AIR CORPS AND INFANTRY SWAP IMPRESSIONS

In line with the Army's policy of encouraging combat Air Corps and Infantry personnel to learn more about each other's role in this war and discover how the other half lives, two 34th Division company commanders recently spent a week with the 450th while Lt. Col. Melvin Engstrom, 723rd Squadron C. O., was on temporary duty with the 91st Infantry Division at the 5th Army Front.

GROUND SECTIONS PRAISED

All ground crew sections of the group and the 531st Service Squadron have been commended by Col. Jacoby for outstanding work in again placing the 450th on top of the 15th Air Force in aircraft maintenance.

The text of the commendation from the Group Commander is as follows:

"Again I can point with no small amount of pride to our maintenance sections. Last month the Group held first place in the Air Force, as it has many times in the past. I am convinced that our maintenance is second to none in this our any other Air Force. Through your loyal devotion to duty and continual conscientious work, you have done your full share in making possible the many vital blows delivered to the enemy's war effort.

The condition and status of aircraft and equipment is directly reflected in our high level of operational effectiveness which you can so justly claim a substantial part.

This is the beginning of the end—with the Hun reeling on all fronts, let us not relent one iota until he is finally brought to a surrender."

The Pleasures of Capri

Occasional stories concerning the number of flak holes in a plane may be somewhat exaggerated, but the stories about the fine points of the rest camp on the Isle of Capri are not exaggerated according to the 450th men who have just returned from that rest haven.

Capri offers many possibilities for recreation, sight seeing, good food, etc. (*molto et cetera*). Those

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The two battle-wise infantrymen were Capt. Ray. S. Sawyer, Manchester, N. H., and Capt. Vernon J. Hale, Cadiz, Ky., both of whom are veterans of several major Italian campaigns. Capt. Hale has seen more than three years of front-line service, fighting his way through Africa and Sicily, landing with them at Salerno and taking part in the drive on Rome, the breakthrough the Gothic Line, and the seizing of Futa Pass. At present, he and Capt. Sawyer are entrenched in the hills south of Bologna. While with the Group, they flew two missions, one of them to Linz, Austria.

"As far as living conditions go, I'd trade places with a 450th man any day" Capt. Sawyer, emphatically declared. "But I certainly wouldn't relish daily excursion over hot targets like Linz."

Capt. Hale expressed a feeling of irritation at the length of heavy bomber missions.

Flying for eight hours at 15 or 20 thousand feet was more trying to me than an action-filled patrol mission. I hate to think of flying 49 more like that."

Capt. Hyle explained that it is difficult for front-line troops to fully appreciate what the B-24 crews are doing, since they rarely observe the effects of long-range strategic bombing.

"But I know *my* eyes were really opened when I saw those columns of smoke rising from the target."

Col. Engstrom, who spent five days with a regiment situated just below Bologna, came back with a better insight as to how the infantry operates and what they must endure. He feels that the exchange of Air Corps and Infantry officers was a very worthwhile project.

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