



## Excerpts from Micro Film reels

The following material was taken from the 49th Wing micro film reel. As reported in News of the Association, the Association's collection of film reels has been printed in part. We have selected this portion for this issue as it seems a fitting tie-in with the end of the Gulf War.

Part 1 is a copy of a mimeographed newsletter that was distributed to pilots from 49th Wing Headquarters Vol 1 No. 2, dated 10 April 1945. This would be only the second issue.

Part 2 is the condensed history of the 49th Wing's operations for April, 1945, the last month of combat operations in WWII.

### DITCH OR BAIL-OUT???



In the month of March there were no reported ditchings in the 49th Wing. There is a possibility that one B-24 of the 461st Bomb Group ditched after aborting, but nothing was ever heard from this A/C. The Air Force had an average of 9 ditchings a month which has decreased tremendously since the emergency fields opened up. These fields are for your use when you run into trouble, and no one will ever criticize you for using them in an emergency. However, remember that they are not for casual visitors and their facilities are limited.

Air Force had 3 A/SR incidents in the month of February, two of the aircraft ditched and one crew bailed out. Of the two ships that ditched one was from the 49th Wing and all 10 men were rescued within an hour. The other ship was from the 304th Wing, all 10 men got out of the ship alive but one was not rescued. The Mae-West that he wore practically every day (but probably didn't inspect to see that there were CO2 cylinders, the caps securely closed and mouth valve closed) just didn't work and he drowned. LOOKS LIKE A MAE WEST IS SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST EXTRA EQUIPMENT TO CARRY AROUND.

The third incident happened when a B-24 was running short of fuel and headed for Zara. At Zara a new check was made and they figured they had enough to reach Vis. Over the Curra Vela Islands the plane ran out of gas and the pilot ordered the crew to bail out at 6000 feet. All ten chutes were seen to open, 2 of the crew landed on an island and were rescued, the rest were blown out to sea and never seen again.

Total score for February in B-24s; 2 men that bailed out over water were saved out of 10. 19 men out of 20 were rescued in ditching the aircraft. WE REPEAT what we have said last month, Practice your ditching drill until it is perfect and then practice to keep it that way. Had the crew that bailed out over water practiced their weekly ditching drill as required by regulations (they practiced it only twice in the last five months) the pilot may have executed a more successful ditching. At the present B-24's lose half of their crew on average when forced to make a water landing. Better yet, why not land at the first emergency field, refuel and go merrily on your way home.

THE SECOND ISSUE OF PEO Tips is 10 days late in order that we may assemble all available material up to date for the preceding month. Succeeding issues will be printed on the 10th of each month.

Compliments and congratulations received on the first issue were very gratifying with each Group asking for more copies. This month we are making enough copies for each crew. Pilots can step right up and have one free, no strings attached. Our intention of getting it out to the pilot is that he can pass it around