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DESIGNATION SHEET
HISTORICAL RECORDS

COMMAND : XXII Tactical Air Command

WING : _____

GROUP : 57th Fighter Group

SQUADRON: 66th Fighter Squadron

OTHER : _____

OUTLINE HISTORY X

WAR DIARY X

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HEADQUARTERS SIXTY-SIXTH F. S.

A. G. 314.7

APO 650, U S Army,
30 November 1944.

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, XXII Tactical Air Command, APO 650,
U S Army.1. Outline History of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the
period of 1 November thru 30 November 1944.a. Present designation: 66th F. S., 57th F. G., XXII
T.A.C., XII A. F.

b. Change in attachment: None

c. Change in assignment: None

d. Change in Commanding Officer: None

e. Change in Staff Officers: None

f. Strength, commissioned and enlisted:

(1) Month of November, 1944

(a) 1 November 1944

1. Commissioned: 41

2. Enlisted : 251

(b) Net increase

1. Commissioned: 27

2. Enlisted : 1

(c) Net decrease

1. Commissioned: 8

2. Enlisted : 4

(d) 1 November 1944

1. Commissioned: 60

2. Enlisted : 248

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g. Stations:

(1) Name of station: Grosseto L. G., Italy.

(a) Date of arrival: " A " party, 11 September
1944, " B " party, 21 September 1944.(2) The squadron personnel moved from Ombrone to
Grosseto Marina, where they are located for operations from Grosseto
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Page 2., Outline History of 66th F. S. November, 1944.

h. Movements: None

i. Campaigns:

- (1) Name: Italian
- (2) Duration: Still in progress..

j. Operations:

- (1) Campaigns: Italian
- (2) Nature of operations: Dive bombing, armed recce, and aerial cover.
- (3) Number of missions and sorties for the period 1 November thru 30 November 1944.
 - (a) Missions: 67
 - (b) Sorties : 507
- (4) Result of most important mission:
 - (a) Mission #934 of 18 November 1944.
 - 1. Destruction of rolling stock, M/T, Ammo Dump, Building and overpass..

k. Commanding Officer on important mission: Captain Richard L. Johnson.

l. Losses in action:

(1) Missing in action:

- (a) Name: 2nd Lieutenant Eugene L. Noyd
 - 1. Date: 12 November 1944
- (b) Name: 1st Lieutenant William C. Tench
 - 1. Date: 16 November 1944
- (c) Name: 2nd Lieutenant Richard L. Place
 - 1. Date: 18 November 1944
- (d) Name: 2nd Lieutenant Henry T. Leek
 - 1. Date: 21 November 1944

(2) The following named pilot was reported as Missing In Action in Outline History of September 1944 returned to his squadron.

- (a) Name: 1st Lieutenant Vincent J. Bracha
 - 1. Date of return: 10 November 1944

m. Presentations of awards to past and present members of this organization.

- (1) Name: 1st Lieutenant Vincent J. Bracha
 - (a) Basis: Gallantry in Action
 - (b) Award: Silver Star
- (2) Name: Captain Donald A. Smith
 - (a) Basis: Extraordinary Achievement
 - (b) Award: Distinguished Flying Cross
- (3) Name: Captain Kenneth B. Skoropowski
 - (a) Basis: Meritorious Service
 - (b) Award: Bronze Star

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Page 3., Outline History of 66th F. S. November 1944

- (4) Name: 1st Lieutenant Vincent J. Bracha
(a) Basis: Wounded in Action
(b) Award: Purple Heart
- (5) Name: Captain Richard L. Johnson
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 4th OLC to Air Medal
- (6) Name: 1st Lieutenant Vincent J. Bracha
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
- (7) Name: 1st Lieutenant George S. Irby Jr.
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
- (8) Name: 1st Lieutenant Howard W. Danks
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
- (9) Name: 1st Lieutenant Howard W. Danks
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
- (10) Name: Captain Thomas H. Callan
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
- (11) Name: Captain William H. Ehney
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
- (12) Name: 1st Lieutenant Miller A. Anderson
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (13) Name: 1st Lieutenant Quentin J. Goss
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (14) Name: 1st Lieutenant James L. Moody
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (15) Name: Captain James P. Hartwig
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (16) Name: Captain Thomas H. Callan
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (17) Name: 1st Lieutenant Theodore Matula
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (18) Name: 1st Lieutenant William C. Tench
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (19) Name: 1st Lieutenant Anthony R. Knauf
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
- (20) Name: 1st Lieutenant Arno H. Heying
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (21) Name: 1st Lieutenant Miller A. Anderson
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal

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Page 4., Outline History of 66th F.S. November 1944

- (22) Name: 1st Lieutenant Wayne S. Dodds
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (23) Name: Captain James P. Hartwig
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (24) Name: 1st Lieutenant Joseph Angelone
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (25) Name: 1st Lieutenant David S. Hutton
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (26) Name: 1st Lieutenant Harold A. Swanson
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (27) Name: 1st Lieutenant Harry L. Gogan
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (28) Name: 2nd Lieutenant Eugene L. Noyd
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (29) Name: 1st Lieutenant Charles E. McCreary
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (30) Name: 1st Lieutenant Robert C. Lown
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (31) Name: 1st Lieutenant Charles W. Mayberry
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (32) Name: 1st Lieutenant Harold E. McDonnell
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (33) Name: 1st Lieutenant George A. Mosites
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (34) Name: 1st Lieutenant Gene Norris
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal
- (35) Name: 1st Lieutenant Carl J. Weisenberger
(a) Basis: Meritorious Achievement
(b) Award: Air Medal

2. Inclosed is the War Diary of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the period 1 November thru 30 November 1944, and narrative of Mission #934.

Charles C. Leaf
CHARLES C. LEAF,
Major, Air Corps,
Commanding.

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Sheet No. 1, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., APO 650, U S Army
 Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., A.C.

- | DAY | EVENTS |
|-----|--|
| 1 | A dive bombing mission at dawn was abortive due to a solid overcast in the Po Valley and the eight ship flight was forced to return to base with their bombs. With the departure of the 86th Fighter Group to a drome in the Pisa Area, our intelligence, operations, engineering, and radio departments have moved into a large two story farm house formerly occupied by our Thunderbomber neighbors. |
| 2 | Extremely bad weather both over the home field and target area kept our planes on the ground for the day. To-day we were afforded another opportunity to match our wits against Mother Nature when a dam broke from the heavy rains of the past week. Water rushing from the surrounding hills soon covered the city of Grosseto and at dusk, the newly formed lake threatened the camp area of the enlisted men. By midnight the swollen canal had washed away the one road between camp and Grosseto. An assembly was immediately called to acquaint the personnel with the situation and shortly afterwards the area was evacuated. With the aid of a long cable, a truck equipped with a winch, and a locally obtained fishing barque, a makeshift ferry across the raging canal was improvised. Then began the tedious task of ferrying the men across, ten on each crossing. |
| 3 | Except for the small detail of men left behind to guard the area, the personnel had been evacuated by early morning. The officer's villas were untouched by the flood waters and the enlisted men will be billeted with the officers until definite housing plans are completed. Word has reached us that the damage caused by the flood is not as serious as first believed. The kitchen was four to five feet under water and likewise several of the tents, but the remainder of the area weathered the storm in fine fashion. |
| 4 | With the roads between camp and Grosseto still unserviceable, a drive of forty miles is required to reach the drome. Therefore, in anticipation of future operations approximately 100 ground crew men have set up temporary quarters in a warehouse a few miles from the airfield. It has been decided to house the enlisted men in the seven villas now occupied by the officers. The officers, in turn, have taken over two farm houses about a mile from the camp area. Rations and additional equipment came across on the boat to-day and there was enough food to serve the supper meal. |

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Sheet No. 2, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., APO 650, U S Army
 Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., AC

DAYEVENTS

- 5 Early this morning the pilots and a few of the ground officers moved to Grosseto where they will be conveniently located for operations. Our Thunderbombers once again resumed their attacks on communication lines in the Po Valley and as the result of two armed recces, heavy blows were inflicted on the enemy's rolling stock. " B " party at Grosseto Marina set to work building a bridge over which the remainder of equipment can be hauled.
- 6 Operations " Bingo," a large scale effort by the 12th and 15th Air Forces to disrupt vital communication lines in the Brenner Pass, found sixteen of our aircraft bombing and strafing an important transformer station at Trento with excellent results. An armed recce was also flown. Work on the bridge progressed at a rapid pace and by mid-afternoon the first traffic had crossed. In view of the fact that the canal was thirty feet wide, that no material was available except fallen trees and scrap lumber and that the men had no previous experience in bridge construction, the bridge can be considered a feat of engineering.
- 7 Excellent weather in the battle area favored our fighter bomber efforts and an armed recce and two dive bombing shows were flown. A Utilities Section has been organized in the squadron for a trial period of one month. Their duties will consist of maintenance of squadron buildings, telephones, lighting system, and sanitation. They will be available for winterizing of vehicles and tents, construction of stoves, or such squadron improvements as may be deemed necessary. The section is comprised of eleven men headed by S/Sgt. George W. Coyle.
- 8 The assault against the enemy's rail and road communications continues and for our part, we flew a dive bombing show and an armed recce. Captain Sidney A. Auerbach, our squadron doctor for the past ten months, has assumed the duties as Group Surgeon; his replacement is Captain John W. Kelley, formerly with a bomb group.
- 9 Two flights of four planes each joined formation when closing weather obscured their designated targets and covered a bridge with an excellent bomb pattern. The bridge connecting our new camp area and the airdrome has been completed and the pilots and enlisted men who were living in Grosseto, have all returned home

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Sheet No. 3, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., APO 650, U S Army
 Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., AC

DAYEVENTS

- to live a normal life. Ella Logan of " Lochlomon " fame entertained this evening in Grosseto.
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- 10 Two uneventful armed reces to the Po Valley and a close support show over the Gothic Line constituted our day's flying activity. Lieut. Vincent J. Bracha, who has been M.I.A. since 9 September 1944, returned to the squadron to-day. His hair raising experiences will rank amongst the best that pilots will be able to relate in years to come.
-
- 11 Heavy operations to-day with four missions being flown. Targets were plentiful and enemy rolling stock suffered additional damage. The pictures taken by the photo plane are now available within a few hours after the flight lands. A MAAF photo man is now attached to the group for the purpose of assuring immediate developing and while the mission is fresh in their minds, pilots have an opportunity to study the results of their bombing.
-
- 12 No variation of the directive and once again it was three dive bombing shows to the Po Valley. Eugene L. Noyd is missing in action after his aircraft was seen to crash and explode. While releasing a hung up bomb, he flew too low and went through his bomb blast. Seventeen eager " sprog " pilots joined the squadron to-day.
-
- 13 The weather closed in after our third show and our fourth scheduled mission was abortive. The men on the line are now eating their noonday meal at the field. The food is prepared at camp and then taken to the line in containers. High neck sweaters and the new type field jacket were issued all men for winter wear.
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- 14 Once again prevailing bad weather limited our efforts to one armed recce. A meeting of the enlisted men was held in the evening at which Major Mallet, Captain Kelley, our new doctor, and 1st Sgt. Pettis discussed several pertinent matters of squadron interest. The largest mail call in many weeks, amongst which were many packages marked " Don't Open Until Christmas," left many in high spirits.
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Sheet No. 4, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., AP^U 650, U S Army.
 Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., AC

DAYEVENTS

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- 15 A "dry run" this morning for a dawn take-off but bad weather stood us down for the day. The "Stars and Stripes," official Army newspaper, is distributed to each department daily. This news sheet has the unanimous approval of the men and by their authentic coverage of all battle fronts and domestic news, we are able to keep well informed of world happenings.
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- 16 On the second of three missions flown to-day, Lieut. William C. Tench's plane was hit by flak above Ferrara. He was seen to bail out but due to intense anti-aircraft fire in the area, no one observed whether he landed successfully. The original men of the squadron are entitled to their fifth (silver) combat star now that the battle for Italy has been divided into two campaigns - Naples-Foggia, and Rome-Arno.
-
- 17 For the first time in many weeks we flew an aerial cover mission for B-25's. However, as often is the case, our medium friends failed to make their rendezvous. Two armed reccees also set course over the Po Valley. To-day's flight found many of the new pilots flying their first operational missions.
-
- 18 Twenty-nine months of operational experience has taught us that trouble comes not as spies but in battallions. When Lieut. Richard L. Place augered in during a strafing pass, it was our third loss within a week. On the first of our four missions flown for the day, Lieut. Richard L. Johnson led one of the hottest shows flown in these parts in many days. M/T, rolling stock, and a bridge were left in the wake of destruction and then on the way home Lieut. Johnson spotted what appeared to be an ammunition dump. Fully aware of the danger entailed, he radioed his flight not to follow him. He then dived down to strafe the central building and the structure exploded, causing eight surrounding buildings to collapse and disintegrate. A brilliant show by one of the most gallant leaders to step into the cockpit of a plane.
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- 19 Another day of intensified operations during which we flew five missions totaling 36 sorties. Once again flight leaders reported
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Sheet No. 5, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., APO 650, U S Army.
 Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., AC

DAYEVENTS

an unusual amount of destruction rained on rolling stock with Lieut. Callan and flight claiming thirty cars. 1st Sgt. Leland W. Pettis returned to the States for a thirty day furlough and during his absence, T/Sgt. Edward J. Doyle will be acting 1st Sgt.

- 20 One ineffective mission was flown and then a solid overcast in the Po Valley stood us down for the remainder of the day. Word was received from higher Headquarters that in the future it will be discretionary with the squadron as to the number of men returning to the States on thirty day furloughs. Our policy will be to rotate ten men monthly.
- 21 Three missions were flown to-day and although we caused considerable damage to Jerry's rail system, we lost another pilot in the course of our operations. Lieut. Henry T. Leek, one of our new pilots, was seen to crash in the side of a mountain. Questionnaires will be filled out to-day stating preference for either permanent rotation to the States or thirty day furloughs. With the arrival of eight new pilots to-day, we now have the largest number of flying personnel in the squadron's history - fifty-one.
- 22 Three armed recces to the Po Valley proved most costly to the enemy's waning rolling stock. Targets have been more plentiful these last few days and our pilots have taken full advantage of this opportunity. One close support mission over the Gothic Line brought an immediate commendation from the 34th Division.
- 23 Inclement weather held all planes on the ground for the day. However, it did afford us the opportunity to enjoy our third Thanksgiving overseas in a more leisurely fashion. The traditional dinner, turkey with all the trimmings, was served in the late afternoon. The new mess hall (a collapsible Italian barracks) of the enlisted men was opened for the big meal.

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Sheet No. 6, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., APO 650, U S Army.

Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., AC

DAYEVENTS

24 Last evening the enlisted men were the guests of the officers at a surprise party which will be remembered by all for many days to come. That old jinx, Bad Weather, haunted us again to-day and we were forced to remain idle. The squadron Christmas cards, designed by Pvt. Karl A. Miller, have been distributed to the men. The card is in marked contrast to that of last year as it enters more into the spirit of Christmas.

25 As the result of the Po Valley and Gothic Line being socked in solid, we spent another inactive day. There has been a reshuffling of living quarters of the enlisted men now that the 65th Squadron has vacated their buildings at Marina and moved to Grosseto. The entire squadron is living in a "casa" of some form or shape. When the names of the men returning to the States for thirty day temporary duty were posted, there were five additional names added to the original ten, plus one ground officer.

26 One effective mission was flown in the morning, and although flight leaders made a determined effort to navigate through the overcast in the afternoon, the two missions returned with their bomb loads. The Red Cross has set up lounges in the old farm buildings down on the line where the men may relax by reading, playing ping pong, while sipping "coffee and."

27 Non operational weather prevailing in base and target areas during the day kept our scheduled effort on the ground. Late in the afternoon, word was received that the dam had broken and profiting from our past experience, immediate precautions were taken to insure the safety of the aircraft and line equipment. Due to orders from higher Headquarters, the number of men returning to the States has been cut to six enlisted men and one ground officer.

28 A maximum effort of four armed recces found us continuing our assault against communication lines in the Brenner Pass. The flood waters have covered much of the surrounding country and

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Sheet No. 7, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., APO 650, U S Army
Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., A.C.

DAYEVENTS

washed out a few bridges, but the drome and the bridge connecting the camp area remain untouched. However, to be on the safe side, a crew of mechanics and pilots spent the night at operations.

- 29 Four armed recces afforded us an opportunity to renew the harrying of rolling stock and road traffic in the Brenner Pass. Hunting was excellent and in the course of the day's operations 34 railroad cars were destroyed and 18 damaged, 26 M&T destroyed and 20 damaged. One of the better villas of the enlisted men's camp area has been converted into an ideal day room. In addition to the ever present bar, there is a reading room, barber shop, gambling den, and a study room in which Italian lessons are given periodically by S/Sgt. Gerald Schwartz. A snack bar with food bought from canteen funds at a local commissary, is open nightly.
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- 30 In our continuation of an all out attack against communication lines in the Brenner Pass Area, additional heavy blows were inflicted on rolling stock. The heavy operations of the last few days has necessitated a maximum of effort on the part of the flying and ground personnel. Any well coordinated team will experience its rough periods but during recent weeks there has been a marked improvement in the squadron's efficiency. Pilots are eager; the ground crew despite their twenty-nine months overseas service, are still willing, and the squadron never seemed to operate more smoothly.
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Sheet No. 8, War Diary of the 66th Fighter Sqdn., APO 650, U S Army
 Month of November, 1944. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lieut., A.C.

DAYEVENTS

Special Account of Mission No. 934:

18 November 1944

Narrative: 8 a/c headed out at 8000 feet over Lonato, Italy area. 4 a/c dropped 8 x 500 GP bombs on 15 passenger cars in three strings and either deisel or electric engines. All bombs fell on the target destroying 2 engines, severely damaging the third and knocking out all 15 cars with direct hits. 1 a/c strafed an ammo dump at F27-74 exploding one of 9 similar buildings and causing 8-10 smaller buildings to collapse. The smoke from the explosion reached 4000 feet and debris entrenched itself in the wings of another plane. 4 a/c strafed 3 M/T moving north at F23-74 and 1 M/T at F18-61, all were flamers. 1 a/c made one pass on a factory building with flat camouflaged roof and left it smoking at F22-72. 4 a/c attacked H/W overpass at F13-63 with a string of 15 cars on the railway tracks. 1 D/H knocked out overpass, disintegrated two cars and cut the tracks, 2 other hits cut the tracks twice and demolished four cars, one of which went up in flames. 4 a/c made two passes on 3 M/T heading east at F17-61. All were flamers.

<u>PILOT</u>	<u>A/C</u>	<u>PILOT</u>	<u>A/C</u>
Johnson	89	Callan	82
Palovich	75	Place	96
Norris	92	Moody	86
Dodds	94	Angelone	71