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DESIGNATION SECRET

Historical Records

AIR FORCE: Twelfth Air Force

COMMAND: _____

SUB-COMMAND _____

GROUP: 7th AF

UNIT: 66 AF

Documents Transmitted: (Period Covered)

☒ OUTLINE HISTORY: May 1945

☒ WAR DIARY: May 1945

____ SPECIAL ACCOUNTS: _____

____ PHOTOGRAPHS: _____

____ SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: _____

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ANA/cb

66th Fighter Sq.

OUTLINE HISTORY

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By Auth CO

1 May 1945

CCA Initials

31 May 1945

66th Fighter Sq.

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding Officer, 57th Fighter Group, APO 650,
U S Army.1. Outline History of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the
period 1 May 1945 thru 31 May 1945.a. Present designation: 66th Fighter Squadron, 57th
Fighter Group, XXII Tactical Air Command, Twelfth Air Force.

b. Changes in Organization:

- (1) Change in designation: None
- (2) Change in Commanding Officer: None
- (3) Change in Staff Officers: None

c. Strength, Commissioned and Enlisted

(1) Month of May 1945

(a) 1 May 1945

- 1. Commissioned: 60
- 2. Enlisted : 240

(b) Net Increase

- 1. Commissioned: 2
- 2. Enlisted : 2

(c) Net Decrease

- 1. Commissioned: 11
- 2. Enlisted : 35

(d) 31 May 1945

- 1. Commissioned: 51
- 2. Enlisted : 207

d. Stations:

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

(a) Date of arrival: " A " Party, 29 April
1945; " B " Party, 1 May 1945

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

(a) Date of arrival: " A " Party, 8 May
1945; " B " Party, 10 May 1945SECRET

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CCX Initials

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HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

e. Movements:

(1) " B " Party from Grosseto L. G., Italy to
Villafranca, Italy

(a) Purpose: Operational necessity

(b) Date: 30 April 1945

(c) Mode of travel: Motor travel and air
transports.(d) Conditions of road, conveyance and
weather: Good(2) Entire Squadron from Villafranca L. G., Italy
to Grosseto L. G., Italy

(a) Purpose: Administrative

(b) Date: " A " Party, 7 May 1945; " B " Party, 9 May 1945

(c) Mode of travel: Motor convoy and air
transports.(d) Condition of roads, conveyance and
weather: Good

f. Campaign:

(1) Name: Italian

(2) Duration: All hostilities have ceased.

g. Operations:

(1) Campaign: Italian

(2) Nature of Operations: Dive bombing, Armed
recce, and weather recce(3) Number of Missions and Sorties for the period
1 May 1945 thru 31 May 1945:

(a) Missions: 10

(b) Sorties: 28

(4) Result of most important mission:

(a) None

h. Commanding Officer on important mission:

(a) None

i. Losses in Action: None:

(1) The following named pilot who was reported

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HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

MIA in the Unit Journal of Events for the month of March 1945 is reported safe in an American Hospital: 1st Lt. Miller A. Anderson.

j. Presentations of Awards to past and present members of this organization.

(1) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieut. Colonel William J. Yates
- (b) Lieut. Colonel Charles C. Leaf
- (c) Lieutenant Eugene D. Kranzush
- (d) Lieutenant George M. Blackburn
- (e) Lieutenant Louis O. Hays III
- (f) Lieutenant Aikens V. Smith
- (g) Lieutenant John A. Bowman
- (h) Captain Wayne S. Dadds
- (i) Lieutenant Matthew F. Heiman
- (j) Lieutenant Truman R. Heron
- (k) Lieutenant Samuel Z. Hunnicutt
- (l) Lieutenant Elvaughn E. Johnson
- (m) Lieutenant James A. Jones
- (n) Lieutenant Glenn H. Koelling
- (o) Lieutenant Kenneth R. Lewis
- (p) Lieutenant John P. Miller III
- (q) Lieutenant Charles T. Paine
- (r) Lieutenant Robert B. Orcutt

(2) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in direct support of combat operations.

- (a) T/Sgt. Jacob A. Amacher
- (b) T/Sgt. Edward Doyle
- (c) S/Sgt. Johnny A. Booher
- (d) S/Sgt. Charles W. Freeman
- (e) S/Sgt. George W. Denny
- (f) Sgt. Charles R. Melloan

(3) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant William W. Parish
- (b) Lieutenant Walter L. Wicker

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66th Fighter Sq.

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1 May 1945

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66th Fighter Sq.

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

(4) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 1st Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant Vernon R. Peterson
- (b) Lieutenant Harry B. Monsell
- (c) Lieutenant James H. Kizziar
- (d) Lieutenant Robert G. Clay

(5) The following named member of this organization has been awarded the 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant George S. Carlton

(6) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 3rd OLC to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant Ray O. Fandel
- (b) Lieutenant John A. Bowman
- (c) Lieutenant Charles T. Paine
- (d) Lieutenant John P. Miller III
- (e) Lieutenant Elvaughn E. Johnson

(7) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 4th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Lieutenant James A. Jones
- (b) Lieutenant Kenneth R. Lewis
- (c) Captain Wayne S. Dodds

(8) The following named member of this organization has been awarded the 5th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Captain David T. Hutton

(9) The following named member of this organization has been awarded the 6th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in combat against the enemy.

- (a) Captain Harold E. McDonnell

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66th Fighter Sq.

OUTLINE HISTORY

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By Auth CO

1 May 1945

CCA Initials

31 May 1945

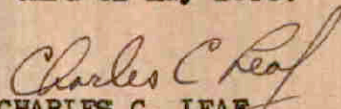
66th Fighter Sq.

HEADQUARTERS 66TH FIGHTER
APO 650

(10) The following named members of this organization have been awarded the 7th, 8th, 9th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal in the order listed below.

- (a) Captain Joseph Angelone
- (b) Captain Leon E. Jansen
- (c) Captain Leon E. Jansen

2. Enclosed is the Unit Journal of Events of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the period 1 May 1945 thru 31 May 1945.


CHARLES C. LEAF
Lieut. Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

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Sheet No. 1, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

- 1 Due to scarcity of suitable targets and the uncertainty of the bombline, the intensity of operations has started to slacken considerably. From dawn till dusk the airfield has been jammed with C-47's landing with cargoes of gasoline, equipment, and some of " B " party personnel arrived on these planes. With the Jerries surrendering in droves it has become a common sight to see a few Partisans marching a hundred prisoners down the road. A few of our men have accepted the invitation of the Partisans to go " Hun Hunting " and they have managed to assist in their capture. However, most men prefer the quiet evenings in camp as they figure it is too late in the games to be undertaking any wild adventures which might in any way impair their chances of returning home safe and sound.
- 2 Except for the necessary drivers for the few remaining vehicles left in Grosseto, " B " party personnel and equipment arrived today by C-47's. Throughout the entire day we were on readiness to fly against opportune targets. In the late afternoon two of the squadron aircraft took off to search for possible M/T movement from some of the German pockets in the area. A few minutes later the astounding news was received from Army Hq. that the German 10th Army had capitulated and all hostilities had ceased in Italy.
- 3 The reaction of the men to the unconditional surrender of the Germans in the Italian Theater has been interesting to note. In contrast to what might have been expected, the news was taken without too much celebrating and shouting. Naturally, everyone was elated but in the back of his mind lingers the thought that only one half of the big job is completed. The day for the real celebrating and rejoicing will be " V " day when they can once again resume the status of civilians.
- 4 In the early hours of the morning the remnants of " B " party arrived in camp. The uncertainty of the permanency of this base still exists and therefore the improving of the camp area is not going ahead at the usual rapid pace. The squadron has not yet received official notice that operations have ceased and until such time when the word is given, we will be on standby every third day.

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Sheet No. 2, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

- 5 A notice was posted today asking for volunteers in an Army of Occupation in Europe. A few men did sign up, but still holding to the old Army tradition of never volunteering or signing anything many were skeptical, despite the fact that they preferred being in an Occupational Army to a combat outfit in C. B. I. With the lull in operational activity, trips have been made to Milan, Venice and Lake Garda. Venice stands foremost as the city that the men would want to visit after the war.
- 6 Perfect flying weather gave the group an opportunity to test hop several aircraft and a few flights were combined to give hundreds of watching civilians a dazzling aerial display. In the midst of all the improvising and repairing in the camp area orders were received to move back to Grosseto. "A" party is to leave Villafranca tomorrow morning if the Service Group trucks are available.
- 7 At seven o'clock this morning the advance echelon left Villafranca. The convoy consisted entirely of squadron vehicles as the Service Group trucks have not arrived. Over the airwaves came official word that the long awaited "VE" day has arrived and tomorrow the terms will become effective. The relaxation during the past few days has been reward enough for the men who have waited so long for this event.
- 8 The advance echelon drove all night and arrived in Grosseto this morning. There was some question whether the squadron buildings would still be vacant but except for a few doors, windows, and fixtures missing, the quarters of the officers and enlisted men are intact. To celebrate "VE" day the squadron bar at Villafranca was opened in the afternoon but most men were content to spend the day relaxing rather than imbibing. Another convoy of Squadron and Service Group trucks departed for Grosseto this evening.
- 9 Being the most advanced airdrome in Norther Italy, Villafranca has been used by the Army as the main base to transport important German prisoners and hostages. During the past few days General Vietinghoff, Supreme German Commander in Italy,

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Sheet No. 3, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

Monsieurs Blum and Lebrun, and many other important hostages have been observed on the field preparing to board transport planes. C-47's aplenty were allotted to the Squadron, and by nightfall the bulk of the men and equipment had been flown to Grosseto. Our Thunderbolts were also flown in to-day from Villafranca.

- 10 An aerial training program of sixteen non-operational sorties is to be flown daily. It will take place early in the morning and all flights will be on the ground by 1000 hours to allow both pilots and ground personnel to participate in the intensive schedule that has been set up to keep the men occupied. As yet this plan has not been put into effect due to unsettled conditions created by our recent move.
- 11 The demobilization point multiples released today caused more furor and talk than the recent news of the complete collapse of the Axis Powers. The official scores will be figured by the Orderly Room but most men tabulated their score from the publication in the Stars and Stripes. The original men of the squadron, who left for overseas in July 1942, all have at least one hundred points compared to the required eighty-five, but inwardly they know that very few of them will be released from the Service.
- 12 A squadron meeting was held this evening and 1st Sgt. Pettis explained what the men could expect under the "VE" day program. Discipline will be most rigid and the Squadron will be forced to resort to measures employed in the "GI" Army in the States. One of the few redeeming features of overseas life is that a man is allowed more freedom and this change, although inevitable, will not be welcomed. With the arrival of warm weather, khaki uniforms were issued today. The few remaining members of "B" party arrived in camp late this evening bringing the squadron up to full strength.
- 13 Although the line men insist that the "pencil pushers" have the softest job in the Army, they actually work as long and as hard as anyone in the Squadron. At present they are swamped with work - today in addition to routine duties, the Orderly Room staff interviewed every member of the organization

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Sheet No. 4, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

to score his critical point total, check his service record and fill in the Adjusted service cards.

- 14 A group party celebrating " VE " day is scheduled to take place on the 23rd of May on the beach at Grosseto Marina. It was requested that each squadron turn in its next beer ration to Group where it would be retained for the gala affair. By popular vote of the men the request was turned down but at a squadron meeting held this evening, it was decided to donate the beer. There are a few things in the Army that a man feels are his property and as proved by the first vote, it takes a lot of persuasion before he will part with even one bottle of his beer ration.
- 15 Two trucks are making runs each afternoon to the beach at Grosseto Marina where one many enjoy himself by relaxing or doing a little swimming. The Red Cross Club located a block away from the Squadron building has become the most popular spot in town. Since the new ice cream freezers have been in operation there, a visit to the club in the afternoon for a dish of ice cream has become a " must." Coffee and cakes in the evening also receive a big play from both officers and enlisted men.
- 16 The effects of " VE " day and the realization that the war in this theater has finally ended are slowly starting to wear off. An impetus and stimulation of morale followed for a short time but the men are now aware that they must pass through a difficult and monotonous period while the Army attempts to keep them occupied. During the day there is enough work and recreation to keep everyone busy but the evenings pass slowly with the subject of conversation invariably turning to " going home."
- 17 Every member of the squadron was given a physical examination by our Flight Surgeon, Captain Tattersall. The check up was as thorough as any the men have had in the Army and it was noted with satisfaction that the majority of the men, despite their thoughts to the contrary, are disgustingly healthy. The new Group Dental Officer, Captain Shapiro, has also been

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Sheet No. 5, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

surveying the men requiring dental treatment.

- 18 The training period of two hours daily for pilots still continues and for additional duties, they have been assigned to work in various departments of the squadron. Our softball team and the Brooklyn Dodgers are sporting an eleven game winning streak and it appears that new talent will have to be uncovered in Grosseto before any team can stop us.
- 19 The enlisted men's dance this evening reopened the squadron's social activities after a lapse of about a month. The attendance was good, the band excellent, and the usual run of women (rather on the shady side) were present. No one as yet has conceived an idea to induce the better class of women to attend.
- 20 Until the job of screening everyone's Service Record is completed, enlisted personnel will be restricted to the Grosseto area. However it is anticipated that passes will begin again after this work is finished. In the meantime, pilots are being sent to various Rest Camps: Rome, Capri, Lake Garda and El Rouse, Corsica.
- 21 Our daily activities are now comparable to those of pre-war days, easily recalled by half of the men of the squadron. Working hours are within the eight hour period and the freedom from strenuous operational duties, early mornings and late evenings is reward enough for the long months of intensive work. With one thought in mind: To make evenings more pleasant, the Group now sponsors a dance nightly in the city park. Playing in a picturesque outdoor pavilion, our orchestra has a large following, while the well-stocked bar appeals to the drinking set.
- 22 The weather is typically Italian, with blue, cloudless skies and many of the men are taking advantage of the sunny afternoons to acquire an " Italian Riviera " suntan. This eve-

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Sheet No. 6, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC.

DAYEVENTS

the Squadron was addressed by Group Commander Colonel Knight. He is leaving for America tomorrow, and cited us for being the "outstanding squadron of the best Group in the Air Corps." He also hinted that the Group would be on its way home between June and September.

- 23 Our Group at last has taken over the Military Theater in Grosseto. A new projector has been installed and now our personnel won't feel like intruders while attending films there. The squadron artist, S/Sgt. Glenn E. Eipper, has been busy nights making miniature insignias for all his clamoring customers. The insignia is a reproduction of the famous Exterminator, suitable for wear on flying jackets or souvenir value.
- 24 It is common knowledge that during the past few years everyone in the squadron has become photo conscious. The splendid opportunities afforded everyone here in Italy to photograph subjects (which were previously mere travel folder pictures) has many of the men carrying cameras wherever they may go. Several of the men with practically no previous experience have set up a darkroom and turn out work comparable to that of professional photograph technicians.
- 25 Within a few days, classes on various technical and administrative subjects will begin in the Group. Fifteen men from this squadron have been selected because of previous experience to be instructors. The weekly dance held this evening proved to be another success. Due to the small hall and the increasing attendance, it has become necessary to refuse admittance to all outsiders except friends of squadron personnel.
- 26 Ratings and promotions both for officers and enlisted men have been temporarily frozen. In the past there have been few complaints from the flying personnel as to their advancement but there have been many from the ground crews. Many worthy men with two years in grade have been stalemated due to the system of filling rotation openings by men in

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Sheet No. 7, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC

DAYEVENTS

grade from the States. It isn't the fault of the Rot-atee but it does seem that men with three years of overseas service could be rewarded for their tireless efforts and good work.

- 27 A novel afternoon's entertainment in the form of a combination rodeo show, polo game on mules, and horse races took place this afternoon at Grosseto Downs. The event was sponsored by all three squadrons with 66 handling the so-called pari-mutuels. The thousand spectators agreed that it was one of the most enjoyable afternoons spent overseas and hoped that shortly there will be repeat performances.
- 28 Material is now being gathered for a book which will cover the history, operational activities, and travels of the squadron from its time of activation to the end of hostilities in Italy. As one of the snapshots for the book, a picture of the squadron personnel was taken this evening. It is hoped that within a short time the book will be ready for the press.
- 29 Nine lucky men departed for the States on permanent rotation, the last group returning - as rotation is now frozen. Despite the loss of three key men who left for home today, the squadron softball team stretched their winning streak to fifteen straight games by nosing out the undefeated Fighting Coaks. Trailing five to nothing going into the last inning our Exterminators scored five runs to tie the score and then went on to win in an extra inning.
- 30 Several information and education films were shown at the military theater this afternoon. The film describing the growth of the United States Army Air Forces was very interesting but a subsequent sex hygiene film was gruesome to express it mildly. Leaving the theater someone remarked that to the list of horror pictures like "Frankenstein" and "Dracula" could be added the "Syphilis" film. today, Memorial Day, was declared a half holiday and most of the squadron departments closed down in memory of our fallen comrades.

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Sheet No. 8, Unit Journal of Events - 66th Fighter Squadron.

Month of May, 1945. Prepared by A. N. Apostolou, 1st Lt., AC

DAYEVENTS

- 31 The squadron enlisted men this evening opened what is undoubtedly the finest bar in Grosseto. A former civilian barroom and club, it was used until recently by the 26th Service Squadron. The club boasts a modern bar, a billiard parlor and dining room for couples. The grand opening was a hilarious affair and as today was payday, the champagne and other liquors flowed freely throughout the evening.

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