



1st "Doll" crew: Standing L-R: CP **Richard Monzingo**; P **Norman Klemushin** - N/Bomb. **Jeremiah Gardiner, Jr.** Kneeling: Radio Oper. **Robert Brandt** - Eng./Gunner **Ceaford Vickers** - Tail Gunner **George Roberts**

"Pappy's" PAPER DOLL Story:

I have been racking my brain just trying to come up with some facts as I know them. I never did get to meet with the crew that took over the Paper Doll when we departed the squadron to return to the states on our 30 day R & R leave. Our orders were cut and we were to return to the squadron after the R & R was completed but during that time new orders were cut and we remained in the states as the part of the Rear Echelon

Our crew was assigned to B-25G tail number 42-64833 at Hammer Field in Fresno CA. The planes arrived and were bright and new to us. Never set foot in them until that morning and we got set to fly up to Hamilton Field. They asked permission to do hot take-offs. The plane ahead of us did a wing stand on take off and flew between the Control Tower and the Hanger. The Control Tower Operator never hit a step in the ladder exiting the tower. He must have hit the ground with one heck of a thump. Enough said, we took off normal.

At Hamilton, the planes had a 125 gallon gas tank installed in the radio compartment to be used on the flight from Hamilton to Hawaii. Planes, 3 per flight, flew at night on the 12 hour flight to Hawaii. It wasn't any thrill firing up the radio for pre planned messages. An arc from the antenna could have put us into orbit. Only bad part of flight was having the auto pilot malfunction and we were headed for the ocean. They got things back under control and we made it to Hawaii.

When we landed, ground crews rushed to the 3 planes and got the fuel tanks out of the radio compartments. Problem there with 833, the tank was still full of gas. I never got or ever heard instructions to turn the pumps on to transfer the gas. We were the only plane of the 3 that had lots of fuel. The other 2 were left with just a few minutes flying time left in the tanks. I have been pondering over that one for the past 60 some years. Guess most pilots loved that plane because she was a dream to fly.

We did lots of testing while in Hawaii at Kapapa Field. When they fired the 75mm Cannon the planes would develop problems so they had to make lots of modifications that took time. We practiced low level, just a couple of feet from the ground, skip bombing. Fun seeing a bomb with a 15 second delay fuse coming back up after you.

After lots of training we finally loaded up and made the long flight to the Gilbert Islands. We were first stationed on Apamama. It was here that the Co-Pilot, Richard Monzingo, painted the nose art on Army 833 and we named her **PAPER DOLL**.



I flew most of my 50 combat missions in the Paper Doll and she brought me home or back to a safe landing each and every time. The one mission I remember clearly was when having a running gun battle with Jap Zeros. The Doll got hit in the right engine and the gas line was cut. I notified the Pilot, Norman Klemushin, of the damage and he shut off the gas and feathered the right engine. We settled down to what seemed like just inches from the water before getting leveled off and starting a slow climb. We moved nice and fast on that mission. Before even being instructed to get rid of everything we could, it was tossed out the windows: guns, camera and even things we should have left in place, including my Tommy gun.

Our wing men talked us to a landing at a Navy Base, can't remember which

island. I notified the pilot that he might not have a right tire so he held the right side up and when the right wheel finally touched ground we looped into the ocean. The plane stood in water with the nose buried. Opened the hatch to get out and that sure was a long drop down, but there seemed to be about 5,000 sailors down there so they said just drop out we will catch you and catch us they did. An officer instructed sailors to get some rope. They came back with the biggest rope I had ever seen and shot it up over the tail and there were so many sailors there that they just pulled the tail end down and dragged the Doll back up onto the shore.

The Doll was out of commission for a period of time while the Navy made repairs and when it was finally ready Klemushin and I were flown back to the island to fetch the Doll home. They still had the Doll on wing jacks playing with the wheels; they weren't working properly. Things weren't perfect but we made it safely; the Doll didn't let us down, even though it looked like she might, for we couldn't tell if her wheels were down and locked or not.

After our departure from the Islands for our trip home we lost all contact with the group. The story of the Paper Doll had to be continued by others and I guess your grandfather (H.B. Botsford) has most of those memories with him. Jim Dorough can fill you in on "The Rest of the Story."

I did hear one final report. Someone told me at one of the Reunions that the Paper Doll was one of those "Great Planes" that received her final resting place when they shoved them off the cliffs of Okinawa, to their grave. I don't know if this is true or not.

Hope that this has given you some light on the Paper Doll and her very first crew. Bob (Pappy Brandt)



Probably Best Left Unidentified