

Here is a running synopsis of my flight log and many notes of events that happened during my tour with VP-43 in the Aleutian campaign.

That year flying down the Chain was a real adventure doing what we had to do and now that I remember it, it was a real adventure for sure. At least I didn't come home with a Purple Heart although I thought a couple of times I would qualify. They did see fit to award me 2 Air Medals for my efforts as result of the fun and frolic that I enjoyed being young, fearless and foolish at times.

I always had a wonderful crew that worked together to make it safe in the air and on the tenders or ground stations.

VR GB Bill

WILLIAM L. MARIS, LT USN (LDO-6852) (Ret) (VP-43 CAC-3s, AMM1/c USN)

"MUSTANG"!

JUNE 1942

VP-43 lost a Plane and Crew flying out of NAS Alameda, CA, as they returned from Patrol off San Francisco, crashing in the vicinity of what is now Daly City, while letting down in the fog looking for San Francisco Bay and Alameda. Ens. George with my Crew were assigned to replace them

June 1 1942 Ens George(2)/3 PBY-5Bu#04449

1.0hrs Test Hop #7/R

June 2 1942 Ens George(2)/3 PBY-5Bu#04449

2.5hrs T/O for Alameda, Returned to San Diego with Radio Trouble

June 3 1942 Ens George(2)/3 PBY-5Bu#04449

5.0hrs SD to NAS Alameda Transferred to VP-43 Det at NAS Alameda, Ca.

June 5 1942 Ens. George (2)/3

PBY-5Bu#04449

9.0hrs

Scouting West of SF/J

June 8, 1942 Ltjg. Masterson (2)/7

PBY-5Bu#04449

5.5hrs

NAS Alameda/Tongue Pt WA VP-43 was on it's way to the Aleutian Frontier to assist VP-41 and VP-42 PBY-5 Squadrons already operating there during the "Dutch Harbor" attack by the Japanese Fleet Aircraft 2 June.

June 9, 1942 Ltjg. Masterson (2)/7

PBY-5Bu#04449

7.6hrs

TP to NAS Sitka, AK/F

June 9, 1942 Ltjg. Masterson (2)/7

PBY-5Bu#04449

5.0hrs

Sitka -NAS Kodiak/F

Some our planes were loaded with Torpedoes to take with us on to Kodiak and had a hard time getting off the glassy water, finally the Crash boat made some wake for them and they practically flew on the water getting airborne.

June 10, 1942 Ltjg. Masterson (2)/7

PBY-5 Bu#04449

4.5hrs

Kodiak to Sand Point, Unaga Isl., Territory of Alaska. We operated from one of the seaplane Tenders in the Area. Due to a shortage of Cannery workers some of the Off-Duty men went ashore and worked in the salmon canneries whe

n not flying or in a standby status.

June 10, 1942 Ens. George (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04449

10.5hrs

Search all nite-Rtn SP

June 15, 1942 Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04444

9.7hrs Scouted Kiska-bad WX

Didn't bomb, returned with 4 500lb Bombs. Landed at Chernofski Bay, at the SW end of Unalaska Isl. We lived on one of the Sea Plane Tenders (AVP's USS Avocet, Gills, Hubert or Casco), which became our home. The Plane crews were ferried to their respective planes via the Tenders whale boat and Ships companies boat crew. When we would have a day/night off we would go ashore and stay in the Civilian Contractors Cabins, eating in their galley, drinking fresh milk and eating steak, and eggs for breakfast, played cards, went hiking, swapped our 30cal Machine Gun ammunition to the Soldiers for the use of a rifle and go target practicing down on the beach.

The Civilian Contractors were off-loading supplies from civilian freighters and barging them over to the new Army Air Facility they were building on Umnak Island just across the channel from Chernofski Bay. They built a false Cannery to store the material in that they were using to build the secret airfield that the Japanese couldn't find when they attacked Dutch Harbor. They Bull-dozed a runway, covered it with Marston Matting and operated

P-38's

P-40's B-17's and-B-24s from there The Navy provided PBY Navigators to the Army Air Corp to get them to Kiska and back until they got familiar with navigating the "Chain".

June 18, 1942 Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04441

6.4hrs Headed for Kiska-returned due to bad WX with 4-500lb bombs and landed at Chernofski Bay

June 18, 1942, Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04441

2.1hrs Chernofski Bay to Dutch Harbor

June 18, 1942, Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04440

1.0hrs Dutch Harbor to Chernofski Bay

When operating off the AVP USS Hulbert (our floating home) I would volunteer as "Bow Hook" in the Boat crew in ferrying Flight/Maintenance crews to and from the A/C or the Beach giving me something to do during my off duty hours. Became a qualified "Bow Hook" in the ships Whale Boat.

June 23, 1942, Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04440

6.4hrs Search-incomplete due to bad WX Returned to Chernofski Bay

During this period the Squadron rescued crewmembers from the USS S-27 Submarine that had run on a reef while operating along the South side of the Chain, PBY-5's landing in moderate swells, picking up the Subs Crew and returned them to Chernofski Bay where they checked over and then flown on to Dutch Harbor and the Sub Base there.

June 26, 1942, Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04441

0.7hrs Transported 9 S27 Sub Crew from Chernofski to Dutch

June 26, 1942 Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04441

0.8hrs Dutch Harbor to Chernofski

June 29, 1942

PPC	2nd Pilot	3rd Pilot	P.C.	
2nd Mec	1st Radio	2nd Radio		
1.	Johnston	Peterson	Kasperson	Elliot
Evans	Dalkenburg	Black		
2.	George	Dobler	Bolman	McNair

Whitford	Havins	Hasting		
3.	Hanson	Carlow	McKinley	Batuello
Davidson	Carty	Defenbaugh		
4.	Hagen	Nelson	Million	Whitson
Palko	Palko	Gabral		
5.	Dahl	Havu	Bucklew	Pursell
Elsiver	Johnson	Falk		
6.	Clark	Arnold	Dunn	Maris
Huppert	Chandler	Zroykovek		
1.	Bagge	Glaspey	Fitzpatrick	Gordon
Lundmark	Ebertz	French		
2.	Masterson	Stephens	Stitzell	Tant
Young	Stillmaker	Kerney		
3.	Gish	Martin	Estes	
Sommerville	Eggergluse	McGrosser	Puesehall	
4.	Davies	William	Pearson	

Edmundson

Earnest

Olmschied

Thompson

5.

Green

Nuenzer

Segall

Smith

Heath

Mercer

Hulse

6.

Jacobson

Throckmorton

Buergey

Mandella

Starrett

Martin

Gillagan

7.

Sorenson

Withee

Coe

Hill

Levette

Hollingworth

Campbell

8.

Smith

Orwig

Grizzell

Strattos

Kimberl

Pollard

Gingrich

9.

Raithel

Shanahan

Fritz

Albrecht

Wilson

Gilmore

McFetridge

10.

SPARE PILOTS

2Ndpilots

11.

Amme

Dobberestien

12. Beieu

Wheaton

13. Raithel

Shanahan

CHARACTER OF FLIGHT:

A	TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION (REGULAR)
A-1	BASIC INSTRUCTION (MIDSHIPMAN)
A-2	ELIMINATION TRAINING (REGULAR)
A-3	FAMILIARIZATION (NON-AVIATION)
B	TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION (RESERVES)
BB-1	ELIMINATION TRAINING (RESERVES)
C	TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION (QUALIFIED PILOTS)
D DUTY	ALL FLYING PREFORMED BY RESERVE PERSONNEL ON EXTENDED ACTIVE
E	FAMILIARIZATION AND PRACTICE
F	GUNNERY
G	BOMBING
H	TORPEDO
I	OBSERVATION
J	SCOUTING
K	EMERGENCY HOP (AMBULANCE)

L. NAVIGATION
M. TRANSPORTATION OF PERSONNEL
N. FERRYING OF AIRCRAFT
O. UTILITY---TOWING OF TARGETS, ETC
P. PHOTOGRAPH AND MAPPING
Q. AEROLOGY
R. TEST OF AIRCRAFT
S. EXPERIMENTAL
T. ADMINISTRATION
U. EXTENDED FLIGHT TRAINING (CROSS COUNTRY)
V. INSTRUMENT FLYING
W. EMERGENCY OR RELIEF FLYING
X. COMMUNICATION TRAINING
Y. NIGHT FLYING
Z. SPECIAL-FLIGHT NOT FALLING WITHIN ANY OTHER CLASS

June 30, 1942 Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04508

13.2hrs Search from Chernofski Bay, on returning we had to landed at sea near Otter Pt. due to heavy fog; popped some rivets, plugged holes with sharpened pencils that we carried just for that purpose; we always had something for the Metalsmiths to do when we returned; we taxied in to Chernofski Bay using the Direction Finder homing in on the Tenders CW Radio

Signals. (MOS)

June Flt Time 100.0hrs TFTTD-707.7 hrs

Every now and then when on Patrol the PPC would forget to turn on the new IFF and a pair of P-38's would pop out of no-where and pull up on our wing, signaling to Decker with hand signals to turn on the "IFF", wave and disappear back into the clouds or fog-which ever we were hiding in as we cruised along searching with the Radar.

JULY 1942

July 3, 1942, Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04499

6.8hrs Search Rtn Chernofski/Casco

July 5, 1942, Ens. Clark (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04442

8.5h Search Rtn Chernofski. Made a down wind landing, went right by the Casco on the step, Decker hit full throttle to go around, I seen we couldn't make it as we would most likely crash into the hill side at the end of the Bay. So I cut the engines fuel supply off and we ended up high and dry on the beach. Burnt off a bunch of rivets, scared Hell out of everyone, but we were alive and no one was injured. Next day the Pilots and Metalsmiths went ashore when the tide was out and replaced missing rivets with machine screws. They dug holes/ditches along each side of the A/C so they could install beaching gear, then a motor launch from Casco pulled the PBY-5 back into the water at high tide. Never a word was said about me cutting the engines so I guess they were glad I did. At least we were alive!

July 7, 1942 Ltjg. Johnson (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04442

0.9hrs Chernofski to Dutch Harbor. So the local FASRON could repair the bottom of the A/C we put on the beach the 5th

July 7, 1942 Ltjg. Johnson (2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04440

0.6hrs Dutch to Chernofski Bay

July 9, 1942 Lt. Raithel (2)/8

PBY-5 Bu#04427

7.9hrs Search all night search-rtn Chernofski

July 10, 1942 Lt. Raithel (2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04427

9.0hrs Search all night search-rtn Chernofski

July 15, 1942 Lt. Raithel (2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04499

6.3hrs Search all night search- rtn Nazan Bay, Atka Isl.

July 19, 1942 Lt. Raithel (2)/4 PBY-5 Bu#04444

12.0hrs Anti-sub Nazan Bay, Atka Isl.

July 20, 1942 Lcdr Jones (CO) (2)/4 PBY-5 Bu#04425

2.2hrs

Nazan to Chernofski Bay

July 21, 1942 Lt. Raithel (2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04444

9.4hrs Search returned to Nazan Bay, Atka

July 23, 1942 Lcdr Jones (CO) (2)/4 PBY-5 Bu#04444

3.0hrs Nazan to Chernofski Bay

July 24, 1942 Lt. Raithel (2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04440

2.6hrs Chernofski to Nazan Bay Atka

July 27, 1942 Lcdr Ray (XO)(2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04441

11.0hrs

Nazan to Kiska, night bombed Kiska and returned to Dutch. We almost run into the Fuel Farm Point (Hundreds of 50 gal drums of gas and oil) on the take off run, CAP Dunn seen the shadows in the dark just in time to pull back hard on the "Yoke", getting us airborne as we sprayed water all over everything-otherwise there would have been a big BBQ.

July Flt Time 79.0.hrs TFTTD-786.7 hrs

Promoted to AMM1C

August 1942

Aug. 1, 1942 Lt Raithel(2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04437

5.3hrs Nazan Search-returned Dutch; I always had the crew carry their personnel gear with them as we never were sure where we would land at the end of the flight, just might enjoy some liberty.

Aug. 5, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04425

8.8hrs Dutch Search rtn Nazan

Aug. 8, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04444

8.3hrs Nazan to Kiska, bombed ships in Kiska harbor, Could see Red tracer bullets coming at us as we dove in releasing our bombs and pulling out, we were attacked by single float fighter on climb out, I got some hits, seen tracers hit the fighter in the engine and cockpit area, the pilot just sat there and looked at us, then flipped over on his Portside and disappeared diving back into the clouds as we turned to Starboard and back into some more clouds at about 2000ft heading for HOME back to Chernofski Bay

Aug. 10, 1942 Ens Decker (2)/4 PBY-5 Bu#04441

10.0hrs Search From Chernofski returned to Dutch

Aug. 15, 1942 Ens Decker (2)/4 PBY-5 Bu#04437

5.5hrs Search from Dutch; returned to Dutch. Often when we got back in to Dutch Ens. Decker would invite us up the O'Club for a round of Cheer as we sat outside on the steps as we Enlisted were not allowed in the O'Club.

This is where I learned to like Scotch!

Aug. 19, 1942 Ens Hanson (4)/13

PBY-5 Bu#04437

4.2hrs Dutch to Kodiak went

Flew along the North the side of Kodiak Island and enjoyed a beautiful trip, could see the mountains and Volcanoes on the mainland. Due to main generator failure we had to run the Aux Generator (APU) below me in the Tower, found out latter that night that I had Carbon Monoxide poisoning from a exhaust leak, I went to the movie and got sick, went back to the barracks and to bed with a bad headache, was ok next day. An old friend AMM1/C Mikoli, meet us at the Kodiak hangar and said that they heard we were all dead. Did he ever get a happy surprise, we worked together in the VP-43 Beach Crew at San Diego.

Aug. 21, 1942 Ens Decker (4)/10

PBY-5.Bu#04469

5.5hrs Kodiak to Dutch Had Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy, Mortimer Snerd & Ophiela, Capt olilough, Ltjg Grohoski Bercent aboard as passengers.

A "Willie Waw" caught us on the take off run in Old Womens Bay, we Water looped and buried our left float and wing tip; we could see no damage on inspection, made a normal takeoff and continued on to Dutch Harbor.

Edgar Bergen got to sit in the "Right" seat and Decker let him do a little flying. Bergen meets up with the rest of a USO Troupe and did a number of Shows at Dutch then went on down the "Chain" entertaining the rest of the "Troops".

Aug. 24, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04427

8.6hrs Search Dutch Ret Dutch

Aug. 27, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/1

PBY-5 Bu#04508

1.5hrs Ferry Dutch to Chernofski

Aug. 30, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/9

PBY-5 Bu#04508

1.7hrs Ferry Chernofski to Dutch

Aug. 30, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/6

PBY-5 Bu#04466

4.2hrs Dutch Search, had along Crew 7 members CAP Fitzpatrick and RM French- we were supposed to return to Nazan Bay but were directed to land at Korvian Bay, Atka because our tender the USS Casco had been torpedoed in Nazan Bay by a Japanese Submarine. Next day Lt. Amme and his crew sighted the Japanese Submarine and dropped Depth Charges on it and sank it, two of the Japanese Crew members managed to escape and were captured and flown to Dutch Harbor for interrogation and security.

Due to the bad WX we landed in heavy seas and high wind in Korvan Bay, couldn't anchor due to the sea state so we would taxi out away from the beach and rocks against the heavy waves on our starboard bow and the wind on our port bow. We taxied the rest of day and night with sea anchors rigged, the next morning Aug. 31, at daylight Mr Decker decided it was safest for survival to beached plane. The heavy seas had damaged our port wing tip float and we were shipping water from nosing into the heavy seas.

Trying to drive the A/C nose first up on the beach didn't work, the heavy seas broached A/C port side too, we got a line ashore off the port wing and tied the A/C off to beached logs to help hold A/C to beach, the beach was very steep and this caused the A/C to heave and pitch every time a wave hit it.

We salvaged all life saving gear possible, set up camp on a flat spot behind the crest of the beach along side a creek. We improvised a tent out of one of the parachutes, gathered firewood and prepared to spend the night.

Ens Arnold. Radioman French and 2nd Mech. Huppert started hiking for Nazan Bay for help, they had to hike around a large lagoon to reach the old Atka Native Village over on Nazan Bay where the Casco was torpedoed. Latter that afternoon we heard a Ships Horn sounding and spotted the USS Hulbert coming into the Bay. The USS Hulbert lookouts spotted us and rescued the remaining crew that afternoon via using a life raft, pulling us off the beach out through the heavy surf and transferring us into the ships whale boat, then back to the Hulbert, returning again for another load until we were all aboard the Hulbert. We salvaged all the electronics gear from A/C as possible. Breaking seas had pounded a big hole in the Starboard side behind the radio gear in the Radio-Nav compartment. We could see Ens Arnold and crew hiking along the ridge on the right side of the bay, so the Ship sounded its whistle many times trying to signal them to come down to the beach, but they never heard the whistle or seen the ship.

After we were returned to the Hulbert we were treated royally, given dryclothes, a quick check by the Ships Pharmacist-mate, hot food, 2 fingers of "Sneaky Pete" in water and a warm bunk. The Hulbert then departed Korvan Bay, attempting to destroy the beached PBY with gunfire and didn't succeed, proceeding back to Nazan Bay around the East side of Atka Island to where the Casco had been beached to keep her from sinking. Immediately A/C were airborne on a search mission for the missing Ens Arnold, French and Huppert and they were finally found four days latter, wet, cold, tired and hungry; after in initial check they were flown back to Dutch Harbor to the Hospital for further evaluation and eventually returned to VP-43 for duty no worse for the experience.

The USS Casco suffered a torpedo hit in the main engine room, blowing a large hole in the ships side. A VP-43 Sailor Sam Cobean, AO-3 went over the side into the water and held a float-light life ring under water until it had burnt out preventing the Aviation Gasoline and Diesel fuel spreading on the water from catching fire. AO-3 Cobean was latter recommended for, and awarded the "Silver Star" Medal for his heroic actions. After a few weeks of repairs by ships company and Sea Bees the Casco was ready to be floated again, PT boats were brought in and tied along the side of the Casco, using the prop wash from the PT boats, Divers with fire hoses were finally able to washed enough sand out from under the Casco that they were able to refloat her on a high tide, pull her back into deep water and send her back to the States for repairs.

August Flt Time 64.6 hrs TFTTD-851.3 hrs

SEPTEMBER 1942

Sept. 2, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/5 PBY-5 Bu#04437

2.7hrs

Nazan to Nazan Searched for Arnold, Huppert and French, didn't find them.

Sept. 3, 1942 Ltjg Johnson(2)/8 PBY-5 Bu#04437
4.0hrs

Ferry to Dutch

Sept. 7, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/3 PBY-5 Bu#04441

11.7hrs

Search from Dutch-returned to Nazan Bay Atka

Sept. 8, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04441

6.0hrs

Anti-sub Nazan area returned to Dutch Harbor

Sept. 12, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04444

9.5hrs

Search/anti-sub Nazan area

Sept. 13, 1942 Ens Decker(2)/3

PBY-5 Bu#04444

6.3hrs

Anti-sub Nazan returned to Dutch Harbor

Sept. 17, 1942 Ltjg Johnson(2)/10

PBY-5 Bu#04437

5.5hrs

Dutch to Kodiak Heading Stateside

P-18

Sept. 20, 1942 Ltjg Johnson(2)/10

PBY-5 Bu\$04437

4.9hrs

Kodiak to Sitka Liberty in had Sitka, Heading Stateside

Sept. 21, 1942 Ltjg Johnson(2)/10

PBY-5 Bu#04437

5.9hrs

Sitka to Seattle, Home again-Granted 14 days leave. Informed by the CO that we were designated "Combat Air Crew" with "3 Gold Stars", indicating combat with the Enemy on Land, Sea and Air. We all went to the Navy

Exchange at NAS Sand Point and bought our new "CAC Wings". Spent 14 days leave with Mom and Dad in Anacortes, I had picked up my Sea Bag coming through Kodiak so spent a few days washing and getting all my clothes cleaned again after being in storage for months in Kodiak.. Was inducted into VFW Post 2982, Anacortes, WA. Sponsored by Comrade Ralph Wagner and Dewey McFadden.

Sept Flt Time 56.5 hrs TFTTD-909.8 hrs

Reported from leave to NAS Tongue Pt. Or, We were bussed to NAS Seattle via Vancouver, WA, so we conned the Driver into stopping at the local Liquor store for refreshments - made the trip more interesting. The next day we were ferried via R4D to NAS Alameda to pick up new PBY-5s

OCTOBER 1942

Oct. 11, 1942 Ltjg Johnson (2)/17 PBY-5 Bu#04483

6.0hrs Alameda to Seattle (Headed back North)

Laid over at Seattle due to bad weather and had good Liberty for 3 days. So foggy you couldn't see across the ramp to the other hangers.

Oct. 15, 1942 Ltjg Johnson (2)/17 PBY-5 Bu#04483 5.5hrs

Seattle to Sitka Bad WX all the way, couple our Planes turned around and returned Seattle) Mike Mandella and I went ashore and explored the great City of Sitka and had a good time.

Oct 16, 1942 HAPPY 23rd BIRTHDAY to ME

Oct. 17, 1942 Ltjg Johnson (2)/17 PBY-5 Bu304483 4.5hrs

Sitka to Kodiak laid over at Kodiak

Oct. 21, 1942 Ltjg Johnson (2)/17 PBY-5 Bu#04483 4.7hrs

Kodiak to Dutch Harbor Home again Operating off the Beach vice a Tender and living in the Barracks.

Oct. 22, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/6
5.5hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04440

Search Sec-11, returned to Dutch Harbor Ltjg Bill Decker's first hop as
a JG

Oct. 24, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/6
7.1hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04483

Search Sec-11, returned to Dutch Harbor

Oct. 27, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/6
5.3hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04437

Search Sec-11, returned to Dutch Harbor

Oct. 30, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/6
5.0hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04430

Search Sec-11, returned to Dutch Harbor

Oct Flt Time 43.6 hrs. TFTTD-953.4 hrs

NOVEMBER 1942

Nov. 3, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/7
6.6hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04437

Search Sec 12, returned to Dutch Harbor

Nov. 5, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/8
5.7hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04449

Searched Sec 11, returned to Dutch Harbor

Nov. 8, 1942 Ltjg Orwig (2)/9
6.3hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04440

Searched Sec 12, returned to Dutch Harbor

Nov. 15, 1942, Ltjg Decker (2)/7

PBY-5 Bu#04437 5.3hrs

Search, returned to Dutch Harbor

Nov. 16, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/4

PBY-5 Bu#04483 2.3hrs

Dutch to Adak-returned to Dutch due to WX

Had a bad Willie-Waw during this time and lost all of our squadron A/C due to the storm damage while the planes were sitting on the ramp in tie-downs, with dump truck parked around the planes to break force of the wind, Sea Bees built wooden cradles to slide under the hulls to keep the beaching gear from collapsing and damaging the hulls. A Willie Waw stood #29 up on her nose and she fell over upside down breaking her back at the blisters. We were then reassigned PBY-5A's from a departing Squadron to replace our damaged planes.

Nov Flt Time 26.1 hrs TFFTD-979.5 hrs

DECEMBER 1942

Dec. 5, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/4
6.2hrs

PBY-5 Bu#04470

Search-plenty rough-returned to Dutch Harbor, first flight in our new PBY-5A's, neat landing on the new runway carved out of the side of the mountain and pushed in to the bay, still working on it to make it wider and longer. The north over-run goes down the Seaplane ramp right into the water. No over-run on the south end-just rocks and water. The PBY-5A had self-sealing(bullet proof) fuel tanks so we only held 1250 gallons of fuel and that restricted our flight hours per flt.

Dec 15, 1942 Ltjg Decker(2)/4

PBY-5A Bu#04401 6.0hrs

Search-returned to Dutch

Dec 22, 1942 Ltjg Decker (2)/4
5.0hrs

PBY-5A Bu#7297

Search Sec 12, (Our Last flight of the year).

Dec. 24, 1942 Had a beer party then went up on to Snob Hill and indulged in a little liquid consumption---all hands came home with a glorious feeling, it was a quite Christmas AM A couple of the guys didn't show up so we went looking for them and found them a sleep in a snow bank along side of the road...And so ends another year.

Dec Flt Time 41.3 hrs TFTTD-1020.8 hrs

JANUARY 1943

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM DUTCH HARBOR, Territory of Alaska

Jan 1, 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/7

PBY-5A Bu#04401

6.0hrs Search returned to Dutch Harbor. New Navigator. Had dry cheese sandwiches for Flight Rations.

Jan 7, 1943 Ltjg Hanson (2)/10

PBY-5A Bu#05011

3.6hrs Moved to Hotel Adak , Suite 301, with shower house over the hill and radio in a riveted tent and with cots and sleeping bags, Army coal stove for heat. See Bee mess hall for 3 meals a day. Oatmeal and Beef stew for Breakfast, Corned-beef and cabbage for lunch, and Beef stew again for dinner. Then just the opposite the next day. Had good home made bread and pies also.

Our crew got flooded out of our tent about 0230 one morning due a "Silver Thaw" Snow water was running down the steps in to the "Riveted" tent and was almost deep enough to run into the crews sleeping bags, Chief Bill Dunn put his feet over the side to go to the "Head" and let out a screen as he went knee deep in snow water, waking the rest of us up.

I turned on the light and was the only one dry as I was sleeping on the "Food" locker, Clothes were floating and wet. So I was detailed to stop the flow of water since I was the only one dry.

Water receded finally, so we missed our flight that morning, Leading Chief Stinson got us another tent temporarily for a few hours, and then we were moved in to a Quonset Hut over in the Valley with the rest of the Gang latter that day. Then spent a couple of days drying out our gear.

Jan 15 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6

PBY-5A Bu#04418

5.3hrs Search south sector-nice and warm. 1st patrol hop from Adak, returned to Adak We almost always had to wade to our planes as the Runway was made in a drained lake(lagoon) dike off from the creek that feed it and there was always water in the parking area. The runway was a foot or so higher and covered with Marston Matting. to keep it dry. At night when we would enter the Runway/Plane parking area there were Army Sentries Patrolling, they would challenge us with a "Halt Who Goes here", and we were supposed to answer with the proper Pass Word ID. Some time we didn't get it right so they would ask us questions so that they knew we weren't the "Enemy"

Jan 18 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5

PBY-5A Bu#04401

5.1hrs Search sec 19, 37 miles from Kiska, good WX except for Fog. The Men (3 crews) who lived in our Quonset started scavenging lumber, doors, window, roofing and concrete blocks and built a "lean-to" addition on the end of our "hut" so we could have a place to play cards, installed a stove so we could cook or heat our left over flight rations or what ever we could pilfer from the "Galley, such as bacon and eggs, coffee, potatoes etc. Maw Chandler and I rigged lights in the "hut" from a near by light pole with telephone wire. The CB's had two 5KVA generators running just over the hill from us. We always shared our "Sneaky-Pete"(190 Proof Alcohol) with all who were generous to us such as the "Cooks" and Army Supply people. We would sneak into the Army Supply Area and barrow all kinds of chow, a couple of the guys set up a Bakery in a tent and we would swap our canned fruit and meat for fresh made pies and other goodies. They were caught and the Supply Officer said to let then go and keep up the good work as they were doing better than the cooks in the galley.

Jan 21 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5

PBY-5A Bu#04991

3.0hrs Search Sec 20, turned around due to bad WX. Seen a B-17 land with his vertical stabilizer and rudder sheered off caused by a mid-

air collision with another B-17 in a flight of B-17s coming in from Umnak

Jan 24 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBY-5A Bu#04401

5.5hrs Search Sec K, Iced up, returned to Adak and landed in light snow

Jan 28 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5 PBY-5A Bu#08119

8.2hrs Search Sec 20, Not too cold, closing in around Adak when we returned. Mr. Decker had some beer for us.

Jan 30 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5 PBY-5A Bu#04418

4.6hrs Search Sec K-2, had to clean snow off wings before take-off.

Jan Flt Time 41.3 TFTTD-1062.1

FEBRUARY 1943

Feb 3 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBY-5A Bu#04418

7.0hrs Search Sec 18 Went down to Semichi Island on Photo, to much snow. Came back seen 2 Cans and 1 Cruiser (IF)

Feb 10 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)6 PBY-5A Bu307294

8.5hrs Went to Amchitka, Patrol, 4 -P38's and 1 B-25 with us. Have runway almost leveled. Returned to Adak-

Feb 14 1943 Ltjg Decker 2)/6

PBY-5A Bu# 7270

1.4hrs Practiced landings

WLD took out a landing light, sent P-40 Fighter crew running.

Feb 18 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5

PBY-5A Bu#7281

4.1hrs Search Sec 17

Returned WX, Boy did I do some Praying, almost spun in on wave off due to snow squall that caught us just as we were landing, went around and climbing out in snow storm, we stalled on right side and lost 600ft of altitude, Dunn took over and pulled us out over Andrews Lagoon, I watched altimeter go through ZERO as we bottomed out and climbed back in to the sunshine. We made another approach and landed ok this time.

Decker said to wait at the Plane so we did, Decker returned with a bottle of Scotch and said "Bill Decker Born, Died, Born again same Day" Happy Birthday, Scotch made two rounds and was a dead soldier.

Feb 20 1943 Ltjg Grisko (5)/17

PBY-5A Bu#04412

1.7hrs Adak to Amchitka, Established first "P-Boat" Base on Amchitka, landed on runway made in the dry lake-bed behind beach.-P40's and 38's were also operating there. We lived in a double tent, slept on cots and ate in the Army/Seabee galley at the head of the line. We ate Flight rations (ham and eggs, hot cakes , milk etc brought in by NATS from Anchorage) and what was left over was feed to the next people in line, that way they didn't get mad at us for having "head of the line privileges" We always made sure that the Flt Crew Cooks had plenty left over. We rigged lights in our tent from a power pole with telephone wire/battery clamps and light bulbs we carried with us. It was easy to "Shinny up a short power pole".

We then heated Snow that had blown in to the tent during the night for hot water in our electric hot cup we carried with us for shaving water and washing up. It didn't seem to matter which way we tied the tent entrance flaps, the wind always changed during the night and we always had fresh snow in our tent in the morning. It didn't make any difference which way we tied off the tent flaps the wind always shifted so it could blow some fresh snow into our tent for our morning water source.

Feb 20 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6

PBY-5A Bu#02958

2.8hrs First Anti-sub patrol out of Amchitka by us, returned to

Amchitka, Soldiers, living in Tents on the west approach moved out, didn't like us dragging our landing gear and wing tip floats right over their tents.

Feb 21 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBY-5A Bu#02958

2.0hrs Anti-sub patrol over to Semisopochnoi Island area and return to Amchitka

Feb 22 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBY-5A Bu#02958

3.0hrs Anti-sub patrol

Feb 23 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBY-5A Bu#02958

0.7hrs Anti-sub patrol came back in due to storm approaching

Feb 24 1943 Ltjg Decker 2)/6 PBY-5A Bu#7294

4.5hrs Anti-sub patrol, 30 Boat (PBY-5A Bu#7294) came in from Adak and took PBY-5A Bu#02958 back to Adak

Feb 25 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBY -5A Bu#7294

2.8hrs Anti-sub patrol returned to Amchitka

Feb 28 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBY-5A Bu#7294

2.2hrs Anti-sub-patrol.

Bad Wx seemed to be clearing When ever the WX was bad/foggy and the P40/38's were flying and couldn't find /the Runway, We would go up and led them in with our Radar or if there was adequate visibility they would fire "Star Shells" to burst just above the clouds right over the runway and they would then let down until they could see the water and/or Amchitka and then land Watched a crippled B-24 make an emergency landing

after being shot up over Kiska on a bombing run. He had no brakes, so he ran off the end of the 3200 ft runway, crushing the nose around the wounded Bombardier. The bombardier was critically wounded from anti-aircraft ground fire while over Kiska and died, but the other wounded survived and were taken to the Base Hospital.

The B-24 Crew Salvage Chief let us salvage some "Spark-Plugs" that we needed for our engines, the B-24 used the same type of Pratt and Whitney 1830 engines the PBV-5A did, just a different dash number.

Feb Flt Time 40.0 hrs TFTTD-1102.1 hrs

MARCH 1943

Mar 1 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBV-5A Bu#7294

1.5hrs Anti-Sub Fog so returned to Amchitka

Mar 4 1943 Lt Pearson (2)/15 PBV-5A Bu#7296

1.5hrs Returned to Adak for duty

Mar 5 1943 Lt Pearson (2)/6 PBV-5A Bu#7297

4.0hrs Search King 3

came in early due to WX

Mar 7 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5 PBV-5A Bu#04419

7.3hrs Search D7/8 down to Agattu and south of Kiska, clear all day, had strong winds

Mar 10 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6 PBV-5A Bu#04977

4.7hrs Army WX Hop

Mar 30 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)6

PBY-5A Bu#04415

10.0hrs Search Sec 9, My first hop as PC of a 5A from a land
base at Adak

Mar Flt Time 29.0 hrs TFTTD-1131.1hrs

Apr 2 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/4

PBY-5A Bu#04401

3.9hrs Army WX Hop

No East of Atka 60 No 50 Home rtn Adak

Apr 9 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/4

PBY-5A Bu#04400

3.3hrs Adak to Dutch-

Run in to Ed Milkowski, (Ed was in the USA), from Anacortes at Dutch
Harbor.

Apr 10 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/4

PBY-5A Bu#04400

5.3hrs Dutch to Kodiak

Flew down North side of Kodiak Island Beautiful trip,

April Flt Time 12.0hrs TFTTD-1143.1hrs

May 1 1943 Ltjg Evans (5)/8 PBY-5 Bu#08863

6.5hrs Kodiak to Dutch Harbor with VP-45

May 2 1943 Ltjg Evans (5)/8 PBY-5 Bu#08863

4.8hrs Dutch to Adak, landed on Andrews Lagoon, I stole a 5th of scotch from the cases of booze for Capt Gerhes and gave it to the Boat Crew at Andrews Lagoon, boy did that raise a stink. Capt Gerhes was pissed off but no one knew anything about it.

May 4 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5 PBY-5A Bu#04411

11.8hrs Search-Attu was clear-seen Komandorskiye Ostrova (Commander Islands) Russia- for the first time perfect WX

May 6 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5 PBY-5A Bu#02958

7.1hrs Search Sec 8

South returned to Adak

May 9 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/5 PBY-5A Bu#04420

3.9hrs Search Fog came in returned to Adak-up at 0430 yesterday and 0145 today

May 12 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/7 PBY-5A Bu#04413

11.2hrs Search Sec 8

down south side and west good WX returned to Adak

May 13 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/11 PBY-5A Bu#04420

1.8hrs Adak to Amchitka for Duty This time we lived in a Quonset Hut this time, chow in the Mess Hall, bathed in our helmets then

washed our cloths with the remain water and slept in bunks. We were really living.

Would watch the B-24's take off with a full load of bombs for Kiska and almost run off the end of the new 10,000ft Marston matting runway, dropping a little down in to a gully as they climbed for altitude and headed west. Seen a PV-2 run off the runway on take off , catch fire and burn, all were saved and air evacuated Anchorage for treatment. Latter in the spring of 1944 I seen a pilot at NAS Corpus Christi and asked him how he got his face so scared up, and he told me about his crash on Amchitka in May of 43, so I told him I seen it happen as we were preparing to take off in our PBY-5A.

We had quite a chat about the Aleutians

May 14 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/7

PBY-5A Bu#08071

11.5hrs Search Sec 4 2 miles off Komandorskiys landed at Ogliuga Island Emergency field in the fog as we couldn't find Amchitka. The Runway ran almost from beach to beach, a small round flat island, had 37 Soldiers stationed there, They feed us in their Chow hall, slept in A/C that night and refueled from 50gal Drums with hand pump next morning after breakfast.

May 15 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/7

PBY-5A Bu#08071

0.8hrs Ogliuga to Amchitka

May 17 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/7

PBY-5A Bu#08106

10.6hrs Search Sec 5 looked into Holtz Bay Attu on way back seen nothing

May 21 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/6

PBY-5A Bu#08813

1.3hrs Search Sec 3

RADAR was out so came back in -was sick so didn't go back out

May 22 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/7

PBY-5A Bu#7284

4.3hrs Search Sec 4

Evening Patrol Landed at Holtz Bay Attu seen some Destroyers firing at Japanese Troops high up in the mountains. Went ashore for awhile and seen remnants of Japanese life-cans of food etc.

May 23 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/13

PBY-5A Bu#7284

2.5hrs Ferried 5 Army Officers from Attu to Amchitka 2 Marine Colonel Scouts. Remember it is still daylight at this time of night

May 25 1943 Ltjg Brant (5)/17

PBY-5A Bu#2481

1.6hrs Amchitka to Adak for Duty

May 30 1943 Ltjg Decker (2)/9

PBY-5A Bu#08113

10.0hrs Patrol-last hop returned to Adak

May Flt Time 89.8 TFTTD-1232.9hrs

June 1943 Squadron left A/C at Adak, packed up personnel gear and rode Sea Plane Tender USS Teal to Dutch Harbor, don't remember how long we were at Dutch before we loaded aboard the USS Cherokof and headed for Seattle WA. Reported in to NAS Sand Point, were interviewed by a Shrink, sent on leave and reported back in to VP-43 at NAS Tongue Pt. OR

Recieved orders to NAS Corpus Christi, TX where I remained for the rest of WW ll.

After WW ll was over I was transfered back to NAS Kodiak, TA, August of 1947 at my request as my new family desired to travel and we did. My wife was a Wave AMM2c when we got married June of 44, had two sons when she arrived to enjoy all the wonderful things we could do, fishing, clam digging, hiking and sleding in the winter. Kodiak could be a winter wonderland resort for everyone to fly into and enjoy for a holiday.