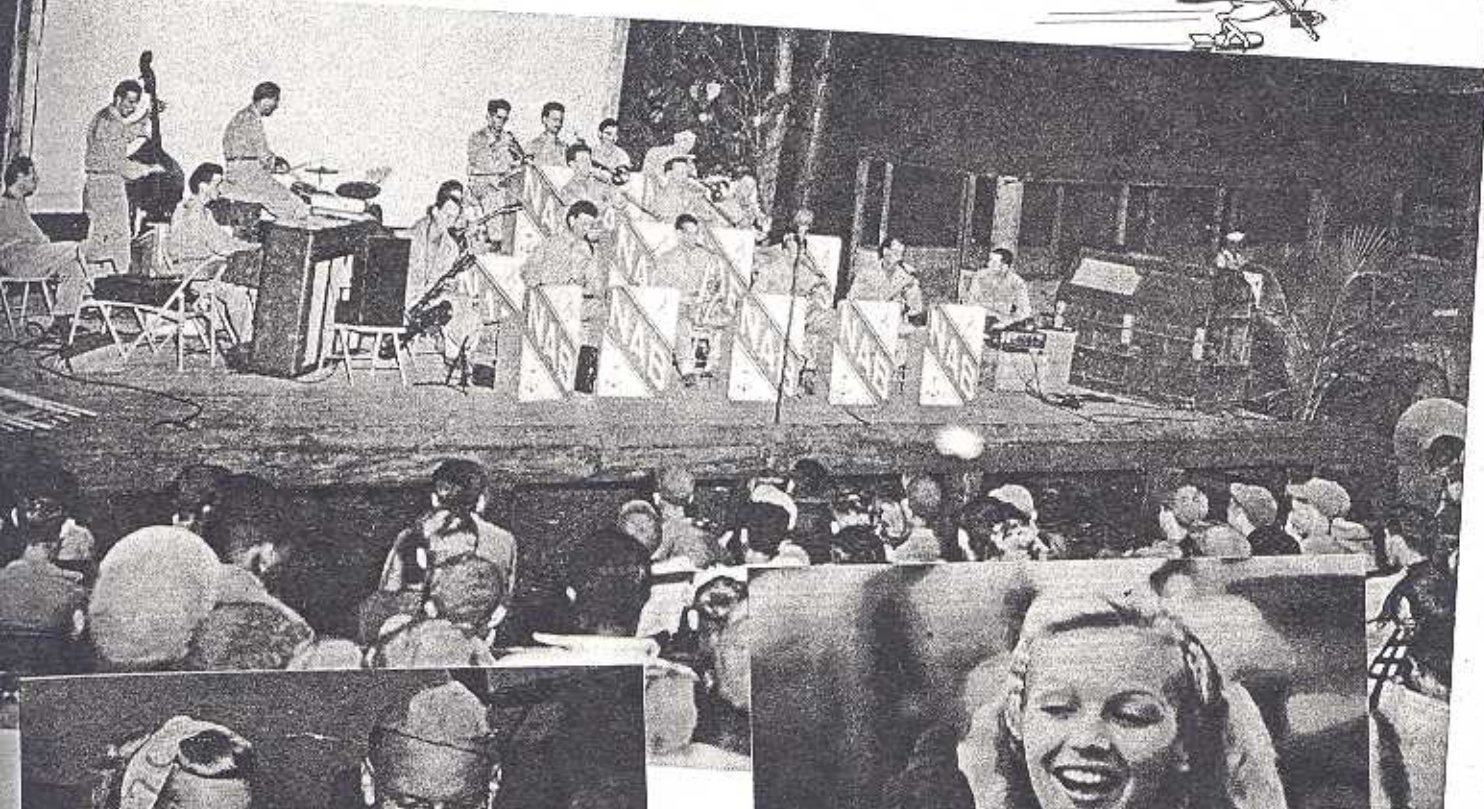


UTILITY SQUADRON 13



cialty of towing exercises for units of the Pacific Fleet based in Leyte Gulf.

Upon coming ashore at Samar, the squadron enlisted men were housed in the MAG 14 area with the remnant of MAG 14. Messing was also with that unit. Officers were quartered and messed in ACORN 13's transient camp. On about 14 June, the last group of marines evacuated their camp and all squadron personnel moved in. This camp, occupied jointly with VJ-8, had been permanently assigned and steps were taken to improve quarters, mess halls,

and sanitation facilities. Throughout June, the men were housed in tents on the bare ground, and heads and shower facilities were strained to accommodate both squadrons. A great deal of hard work was done by all hands during unloading and setting up. Crews were operating day and night. Work was hampered considerably by heavy rains and the resultant deep mud.

Toward the end of the month, primitive shop facilities had been set up in tents on the strip and a stable parking area had been assigned squadron planes.



In July, VJ-13 rendered more services than in any other month since its commissioning. The servicing was largely of the warships in Admiral Bull Halsey's rampaging 3rd fleet.

The final large move of the squadron was made on July 21st when the line, shop, base radio, operations, and other flight departments were moved to a new area which had been constructed for VJ-9 and which circumstances necessitated their sharing with VJ-13. The shops and offices were Quonset huts, a great improvement over the tents used previously, and the parking area was graded, oiled coral. Between 21 July and the end of the month, departments concerned with the move were busy installing equipment and machinery and Public Works was thoroughly occupied in constructing work benches, tool cribs, storage lockers, parachute hot lockers, etc.

Meanwhile the Naval Construction Battalion was continuing construction and repairs in the Camp Area. The mess halls and crews quarters were nearly completed (the men were up off the ground again), the new dispensary was taking shape, road beds were being laid.

Since services have not been required on Sunday in this area, a liberty schedule of every Sunday off for all hands but the duty section was inaugurated on 22 July. That date was the first day of liberty for squadron personnel in over two months, and was very welcome.

The first hint of the Japanese surrender offer came through while almost every one was at the movies on that memorable 15th of August. What a night that was! Spontaneous celebration lasted most of the night and everything after that seemed anticlimactic.

Demands for services were heavy during the first half of August, but dropped away to only a few operational flights a day after the VJ day hint. Shipping in the Leyte Gulf area was frozen in anticipation of possible demands for transporting occupational troops and an extensive anti-aircraft practice program was envisioned by Co-Train. This failed to materialize, however, owing to the nearly unanimous lack of interest of the ships. The army anti-aircraft searchlight battalion with whom the squadron had been conducting searchlight tracking two nights per week, began to roll up and that service was also discontinued.

On 21 August sixteen enlisted men eligible for discharge under AINav 196 were transferred to Re-

ceiving Station, Samar, for transportation to separation centers in the United States. Twelve officers were also eligible, of whom six desired immediate separation.

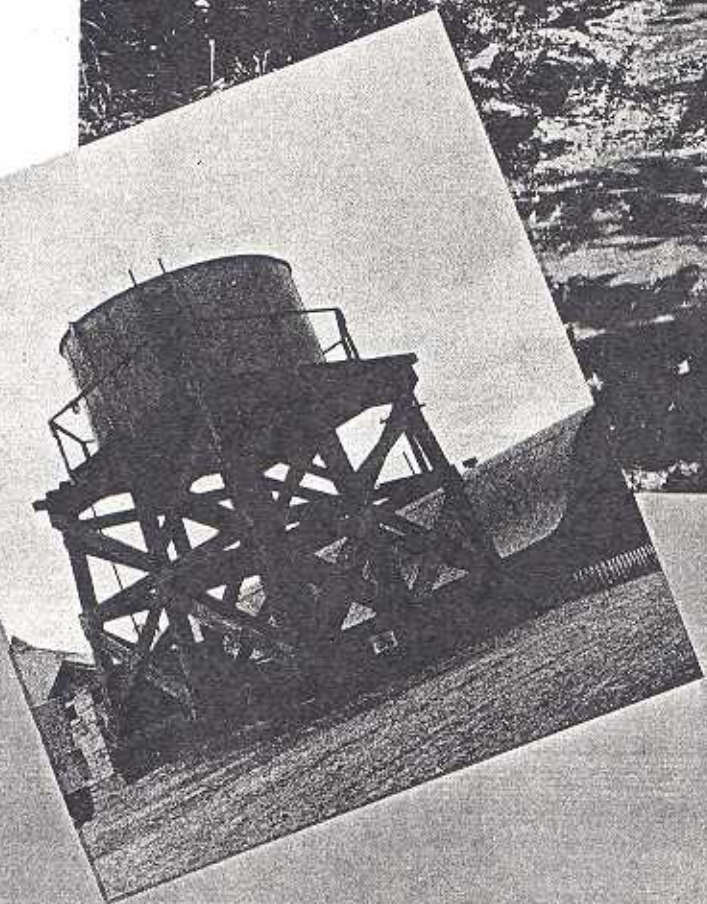
Following the September 2nd Proclamation of VJ day, demands for tow target services decreased markedly and immediately. Upon this virtual cessation of requests for the Squadron's primary wartime services, VJ-13 made known its readiness to assist in the huge demobilization and roll-up program then being carried on. In line with the latter, a number of administrative transportation missions were flown. The remainder of the daily flight time was in training and familiarization hops to keep pilots, planes, and crews up to par.

The execution of demobilization and reenlistment AINavs necessitated intermittent reorganization within the Squadron during September. Nine officers and 21 enlisted men eligible for discharge were transferred during the month. Twenty-three additional enlisted men were returned to the United States on reenlistment leave. On 13 September five Ensigns who previously had duty within Air Group 99 were transferred to VJ-13 by ComairPacSubComFwd to bolster the depleted pilots' roster. No enlisted men were received during the month. On 29 September Lt. Comdr. M. I. Falk became Acting Executive Officer when his predecessor Lt. Comdr. J. A. Mohlman was transferred to VJ-10.

In the meantime an extensive athletic program was initiated. Fortunately coincident was the completion of the Crews' Athletic Field (an extensive model field with several ball diamonds) and the Crews' Recreation Hall. The latter was nicely equipped, having hundreds of library books, a coffee bar, ice machine, ice cream machine, radio, record-player, ping-pong tables, and writing tables. During September, VJ-13 won the International League Baseball championship and copped first place in the P.T. Base basketball league. Also, as part of this expanded leisure-time program, regular 50-man fishing parties went forth to try their luck on Mondays, and on week-ends, Special Liberty parties went to Cebu Island.

September saw the completion of the entire camp project. What a liveable place had arisen from the mammoth mudhole that was there when we first arrived!

Almost all of the talk during September, among both officers and enlisted men, centered around two

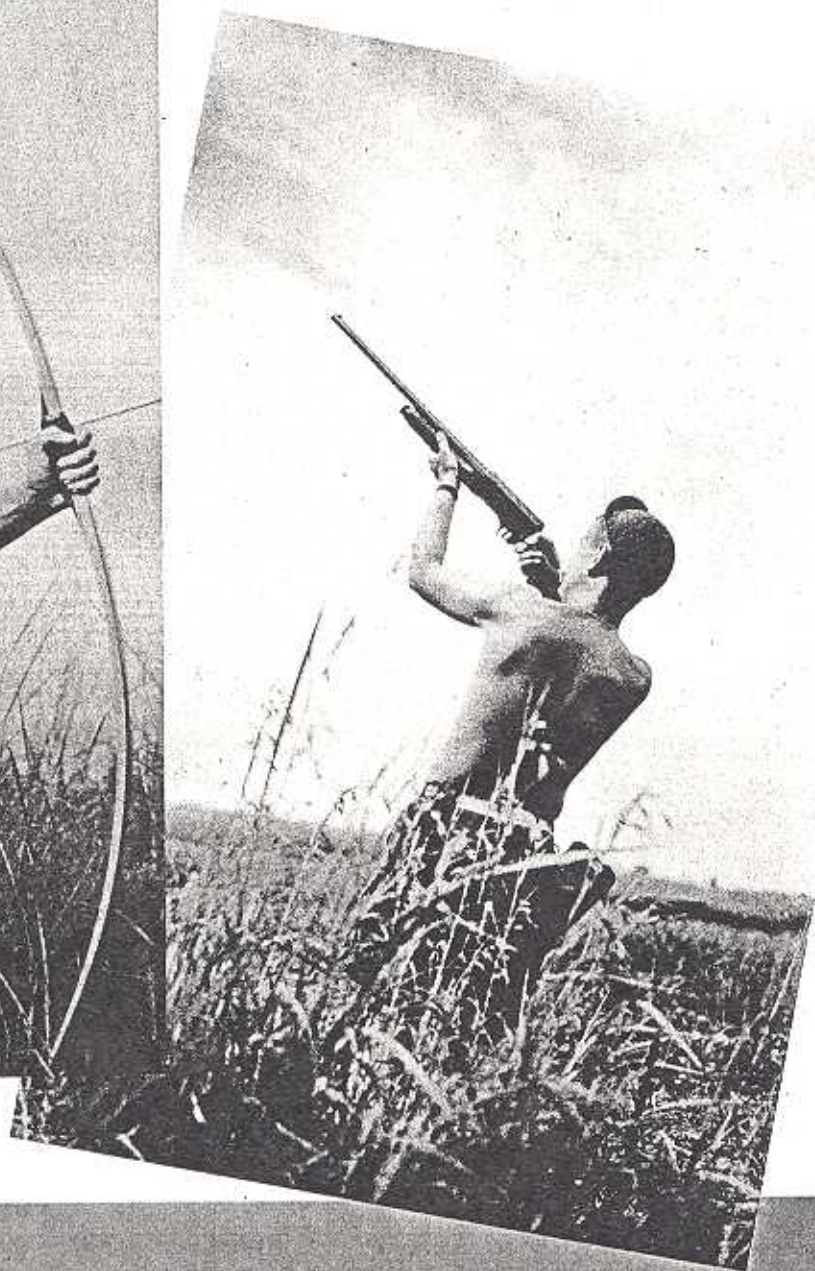


unanswerable questions: "When will we get back to the States?" and "When will the points be lowered enough to include ME?"

Lt. Comdr. John D. Goodsell, Acting Skipper of VJ-13 since the squadron's arrival on Samar in June, was on 1 October, ordered to duty as Commanding Officer by BUPers. Comdr. Carl D. Simonsen, our previous Commanding Officer who had been ordered to Guam on 8 June as temporary relief for Com UtronsFwdAreas had been ordered to BUPers to that command.



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From the standpoint of services, October was the quietest month since VJ-13 was commissioned. In the early part of the month, 4 planes towed ten hours for an LCI flotilla, the only service requested during October.

Demobilization beckoned one more officer and 17 more enlisted men during October. Those men were transferred, either singly or in small groups (on the respective dates of their reaching their "Critical Score") to the Receiving Station on Samar, to await transportation to the U. S.

Without a doubt, the most talked-of single event in October was VJ-13 Detachment A's unscathed survival of the tragic Okinawa typhoon of 9 October. It was an experience that all of them will long remember. The Detachment which left Samar September 29th, reported to NAB, Yonabaru, Okinawa, on 4 October, after having been weathered in at Laoag on Northern Luzon for five days. The day that the detachment arrived at Okinawa, it was ready to render requested services, but there seemed no immediate demand. It was on 1700 8 October