

APPENDIX II - Aircraft Lost and Damaged ‘ Black Sunday’ 16th April 1944

1. A-20G # 42-86563 13th BS/ 3rd Attack Group (Tail letter ‘P’).

2/Lt Donald Dower pulled out of formation when he decided he needed to throttle back to save fuel, accompanied by a wingman flying A-20G #42-86615. They became temporarily lost but found the coast and followed it to Yamai, by which time they were both critically short of fuel. Dower put down at Yamai strip near the beach, the aircraft written off. It was salvaged for parts for a service squadron, and in 1998 the main airframe - minus tail and outer wing panels - still lies where it came to rest.

2. A-20G # 42-86768 90th BS/ 3rd Attack Group

Belly-landed at Saidor by an unidentified pilot. As it came to rest it struck *Dirty Old Man*, a P-47D assigned to the 348th FG. The A-20G was written off, its pilot having to be extracted from the twisted fuselage.

3. A-20G # 43-9186 13th BS/ 3rd Attack Group (Tail letter ‘E’) HONEYBUNCH

Honeybunch’s main gear collapsed when landing through aircraft wreckage at Saidor. It was subsequently repaired.

4. A-20G # 43-9399 675th BS/ 417th BG (Tail letter ‘N’)

1/Lt Duane Aamodt’s right wing impacted with an unidentified B-25D while landing at Saidor. Both aircraft were later repaired.

5. A-20G # 42-86615 13th BS/ 3rd Attack Group (Tail letter ‘T’)

Forced-landed at Yamai by an unknown pilot who was Donald Dower’s wingman (see account in #1 above), and written off after the undercarriage collapsed and twisted the fuselage. The

airframe was salvaged by the RAAF in 1985, and was in storage at Amberley RAAF base, Queensland, in 1998.

6. A-20G # 42-86713 13th BS/ 3rd Attack Gr. POWERFUL KATRINKA

This aircraft led the 13th BS for the mission flown by 1/Lt Richard Walker. As Walker landed in the confusion at Saidor his wingman Lt Linzemier flew under him to land. *Powerful Katrinka* skidded off the side of the runway shoulder and came to rest alongside a mud embankment. It was salvaged for parts as the airframe was badly damaged.

7. A-20G # 42-86772 387th BS/ 312th BG (Tail Letter ‘J’) BENNY’S BABY

Benny’s Baby flown by 2/Lt Glen Benskin forced-landed in a swamp north-east of Annenberg. After several rescue attempts Benskin and gunner ‘JJ’ Westerman were eventually flown to safety in a 25th Liaison Squadron Cub. Salvaged by RAAF in 1985 for parts.

8. A-20G # 42-86786 388th BS/ 312th BG (Tail Letter ‘F’) THE HELL’N PELICAN II

The Hell’N Pelican II flown by 2/Lt Charles Davidson with gunner Sgt John McKenna forced-landed near Amaimon village at 1715 hrs. Both crewmembers were picked up by a Royal Australian Navy store carrier *HMAS Matafele* on 1 May 1944 in Madang harbour after the crew made their way down the Gogol River. Salvaged by the RAAF in 1984 for restoration, and in August 1995 the aircraft was displayed in Brisbane City Square as part of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations for VJ Day. Its restoration was completed in April 1996, and it was officially handed over to the Papua New Guinea government in a ceremony on

12th September 1996 at RAAF Amberley Air Force base. Davidson was present at the celebration with his wife Thelma.

9. A-20G # 43-9039 13th BS/ 3rd Attack Group (Tail Letter 'S') JOY BABY

Joy Baby (with name *Jane* on LH cowl) flown by 2/Lt Billy Sanders ran out of fuel and forced-landed on the coast near northern mouth of Malas River, Tokain village, 4'40"S, 145'36"E. Both crew members were rescued by a US Navy VPB-34 Squadron *Blackcat* the following day (official records state crash location as "*Tariltce*"). The aircraft still lies in the sago swamp where it came to rest.

10. A-20G # 43-9098 387th BS/ 312th BG (Tail letter 'S') THE TEXAN

The Texan was ditched by Squadron Commander Captain Frank Smart with gunner Sgt Mike Music south-east of Bogadjim at 1735 hrs. Although both crew were seen in a liferaft minutes after ditching they were never found, and were officially classified Missing in Action in 1949. The aircraft still lies underwater where it came to rest, on a sandy seabed.

11. A-20G # 43-9401 672nd/ 417th BG

Forced-landed at Yamai strip by 2/Lt Phillip Crow and written off. Fuselage salvaged for parts by the RAAF in 1985.

12. A-20G # 43-9488 675th BS/ 417th BG (Tail letter 'V')

One of nine 675th BS A-20Gs which diverted to Finschhafen but was ditched by 2/Lt Michael Jovanovich 35 miles north-west of Finschhafen at 1655 hours. Jovanovich was rescued by a PT boat, but gunners Sgts Jack Barr and Melvin

Cope went down with the aircraft and were presumed drowned.

13. A-20G # 43-9491 13th BS/ 3rd Attack Group

Forced-landed at Yamai strip and written off. Fuselage salvaged by the RAAF in 1985 for parts.

14. A-20G # 43-9628 388th/ 312th BG (Tail letter 'A') LADY CONSTANCE

Lady Constance flown by 2/Lt Joseph Gibbons forced-landed near Wabusarik village. Both crew were rescued by a 25th Liaison Squadron Cub nearly a week later. The RAAF tried first salvaging parts of this aircraft in October 1984 but lost the LH engine when it was cut loose in a sling from an airborne Chinook helicopter. Remainder of aircraft salvaged 1985 for parts.

15. A-20G # 43-9629 675th BS/ 417th BG (Tail letter 'E')

Flown by 2/Lt Edward Davidson, this aircraft's left-hand main gear collapsed while landing in mud at Yamai strip. The crew suffered minor injuries, but the aircraft was written off. Fuselage salvaged by RAAF in 1985 for parts.

16. A -20G # 43-9669 672nd BS/ 417th BG IN THE MOOD

2/Lt Arthur Gresens landed during the height on confusion at Saidor airfield. His A-20G drove through the burning wreckage of the mid-runway crash and came to rest against an embankment. None of the crew was injured but *In the Mood* was a write-off.

17. B-24D # 42-72946 403rd BS/ 43rd BG HERE TIS

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Flown by 2/Lt Raymond Cooley, *Here Tis* went missing 50 miles north of the emergency field at Faita in the Ramu Valley. It was last seen climbing through thick cloud at approximately 1500 hrs. The crew of ten was subsequently classified 'Missing in Action'.

18. B-24J # 42-109977 19th BS/ 22nd BG

2/Lt R.L Anderson swerved to avoid an oncoming Mitchell when landing at Saidor, and the Liberator's undercarriage collapsed. It was later repaired.

19. B-24J # 42-100225 408th BS/ 22nd BG

Captain Thomas Paschal and his crew were last sighted in formation 20 miles north-east of the coastal village of Bogadjim at 1450 hrs. The aircraft and crew have never been located.

20. B-24J # 42-109975 408th BS/ 22nd BG

Shortly after take-off from Nadzab, 1/Lt James Raysor's Liberator crashed four miles North-west of Gusap airfield, killing seven crewmembers. It is believed that Raysor was trying to land at Gusap because of cloud, and misjudged the approach.

21. B-24J # 42-110000 408th BS/ 22nd BG

1/Lt Robert Stone ordered his crew to abandon ship over mountains, 20 miles north-east of Bogadjim. Eight crewmembers survived (one took two weeks to walk out from the jungle), but two were never found.

22. F-7A # 42-73042 20th CMS/ 6th PG

2/Lt Royce Harms' reconnaissance Liberator was hit by flak in two engines over Hollandia. It was difficult to control when landing on Saidor's slippery muddy surface where it slid to the right into a mud embankment and broke its back. The crew sustained no injuries.

23. B-25D # 41-30337 405th BS/ 38th BG

1/Lt Robert Huhn's Mitchell collided head-on with Lightning F-5A # 42-67350 in poor visibility on Saidor's runway. Both aircraft were destroyed, their wreckage bulldozed off the strip. Four crew, including Huhn, perished in the crash.

24. B-25D # 41-30189 71st BS/ 38th BG
SWEET JEANNE

Sweet Jeanne flown by 1/Lt Marshall Phillipit collided with B-25D *Seven Day Leave* during the end of a landing roll at Saidor. It was later repaired by a service squadron.

25. B-25D # 41-30611 71st BS/ 38th BG
SEVEN DAY LEAVE

Seven Day Leave, flown by 1/Lt Paul Popma, collided with *Sweet Jeanne* B-25D # 41-30189 at Saidor but was later repaired by a service squadron.

26. B-25G # 42-64867 823rd BS/ 38th BG
OLD WAR HORSE

Old War Horse flown by 1/Lt Harvey skidded sideways when landing at Saidor, collapsing its undercarriage and twisting the airframe beyond repair. The wreckage was later removed to Saidor's 'boneyard'.

27. B-25D # 41-30020 499th BS/ 345th BG STINGEROO,

STINGEROO, flown by 1/Lt James MacWilliam, was ditched east of Kar Kar Island after low oil pressure caused an engine failure. The crew was rescued by a US Navy VPB-34 Squadron PBY 'Blackcat' the next day.

28. B-25D # 41-30315 500th BS/ 345th BG TINKIE

TINKIE, flown by Lt James Waggle, was last seen at low altitude in formation near Bogadjim. It has never been located.

29. B-25D # 41-30527 823rd BS/ 38th BG FER-DE-LANCE

Fer-De-Lance was forced-landed by 1/Lt G.J Maturi at Yamai. Its undercarriage collapsed in the mud and the aircraft was written off. In 1998 the airframe still rested near Yamai village, minus tail and outer wing panels.

30. F-5A # 42-67350 26th PRS/ 6th PRG

1/Lt Donald Christians' reconnaissance Lightning collided head-on with B-25D # 41-30337 in poor visibility while landing at Saidor. Both aircraft were destroyed, their flaming wreckage immediately bulldozed from the runway to allow other aircraft to land. Christians was killed instantly in the crash.

31. P-38H # 42-66668 36th FS/ 8th FG CORKY JR

2/Lt Robert Keown was last seen circling off-shore Yamai strip in poor visibility, flying "Corky" Smith's aircraft 'S' for the mission. Evidence of aircraft wreckage was found off-shore around the time of the crash, and whilst

there is no proof that it belonged to Keown's Lightning, it is likely that it did. Keown's body was never recovered.

32. P-38J # 42-104352 433rd FS/ 475th FG Squadron Number #182 (unnamed)

2/Lt Joe Price landed this Lightning, normally flown by 'Chase' Brenizer, gear-up at Saidor to slow the aircraft down after he nearly collided with a B-25. He collapsed when exiting the aircraft which was extensively damaged after it drove through wreckage on the strip, then came to a stop against an embankment. Brenizer's Lightning was written-off, and replaced by P-38J #42-104494 which he named CHASE'S ACE.

33. P-38J #42-104310 433rd FS/ 475th FG. Squadron #175.

2/Lt Stanley Northrup's Lightning suffered a nosewheel collapse at Saidor when he successfully avoided a collision with a B-24. Although both propellers were bent in the process, the aircraft was later repaired and returned to service.

34. P-38H # 42-66832 80th FS/ 8th FG

1/Lt Lawrence Reeves was last seen circling off-shore Yamai strip. Although Reeves was flying with the 36th Squadron, the aircraft was assigned to the 80th FS at the time of its loss.

35. P-38H (serial unknown) 36th FS/ 8th FG

Lt Eugene Zielinski bailed out 800 feet off-shore Yalu Point. He was rescued by a US Navy barge. His Lightning dove into the sea.

36. P-38J # 42-104015 433rd FS, 475th FG.

Lt Robert Tomberg bailed out near Bogadjim and returned to active duty 23rd April 1944 after being guided to safety by natives. The crumpled wreckage of the aircraft, which had the squadron number **179** painted on its nose, still lies on the jungle floor in the mountains behind Bogadjim.

37. P-38J # 42-104351 433rd FS/ 475th FG

1/Lt Calvin G. Wire's right-hand engine clipped a tree whilst returning low along the coast, and he feathered it. He flew into the ocean just off-shore Yamai strip while making a second approach on one engine in poor visibility. Despite injuries, he successfully kicked out of the cockpit and got into his liferaft. It was blown towards shore and he was rescued shortly afterwards by two US soldiers in a canoe.

38. P-38J # 42-104355 431st FS/ 475th FG

2/Lt Milton Macdonald's Lightning was last seen running between scud cloud layers near Annenberg. The aircraft's wreckage was located postwar at approximately 05°13'S, 145°39'E behind Madang near Efu village. MacDonald's remains were positively identified in a mass grave at Ambon after the war. It appears likely therefore that he was captured by the Japanese, then later moved to Ambon where he was executed.

39. P-38J # 42-104385 433rd FS/ 475th FG

1/Lt Austin Neely was flying one of three 433rd Lightnings last seen five

miles west of the coastal village of Bogadjim in thick cloud, never located. It is likely that Neely either lost control of the aircraft in the storm or flew into the mountainous terrain over which he was flying at the time of his disappearance.

40. P-38J # 42-104390 433rd FS/ 475th FG

1/Lt Louis Longman was flying one of three 433rd Lightnings last seen five miles west of the coastal village of Bogadjim in thick cloud, never located. The Lightning had squadron number **185** painted on its nose. It is likely that Longman either lost control of the aircraft in the storm or flew into the mountainous terrain over which he was flying.

41. P-38J # 42-104381 433rd FS/ 475th FG

1/Lt Lewis Yarbrough was flying one of three 433rd Lightnings last seen five miles west of the coastal village of Bogadjim in thick cloud, never located. It is likely that Yarbrough either lost control of the aircraft in the front or flew into the mountainous terrain over which he was flying at the time of his disappearance.

42. P-38J # 42-67594 432nd FS/ 475th FG

2/Lt Robert Hubner was last seen at position 05°30'S, 145°00'E in formation with Jack Luddington. Hubner was last heard on the radio giving a distress call and his position as 60 miles SW of Madang. Neither Hubner or his Lightning have ever been located.

43. P-38J # 42-67605 432nd FS/ 475th FG

2/Lt Jack Luddington was last seen at position 05°30'S, 145°00'E in formation with Lt Robert Hubner. Luddington's identity bracelet was discovered on the corpse of a Japanese infantryman near the village of Afua in 1944, and the crumpled remains of his Lightning were discovered in 1948 near Madang. There is no conclusive proof as to Luddington's fate however, although it appears most likely that he bailed out before being captured.

44. P-38H # 42-66555 36th FS/ 8th FG

2/Lt Walter Mikucky crashed from low altitude into the ocean off-shore Yamai strip and was killed.

45. P-39Q (serial number unknown) 110th TRS/ 71st TRG

Bellied-in by an unidentified pilot when landing at Saidor. It was later repaired by a service squadron.

46. P-47D (serial no. unknown) 342nd/ 348th FG DIRTY OLD MAN

This Thunderbolt was impacted by landing A-20G # 42-86768 while parked on the side of Saidor strip. It was later repaired.

Summary statistics (including aircraft later repaired)

- Eleven forced-landed (ten A-20Gs, one B-25)
 - Four ditched (two A-20Gs, one B-25, one P-38)
 - Three abandoned (two P-38s, one B-24)
 - Eleven missing (eight P-38s, two B-24s, one B-25)
 - Two crashed (one B-24, one P-38)
- Fifteen damaged or written off at Saidor and Yamai (four A-20Gs, one P-39Q, one P-47, four B-25s, one F-5A, one F-7A, one B-24, two P-38s) - some of these were later repaired. Black Sunday therefore claimed a total of thirty-seven Fifth Air Force aircraft written off - either destroyed or lost.