

It is not generally known that the 376th has, within the group, an Air Force all its own. This Air Force is The Yugoslav Air Force, operated by Yugoslav nationals trained in the United States. They made their debut in November 1943 in four B-24 Liberator bombers presented to them by President Roosevelt at Bolling Field on their completion of a year's training in America. Teaming up with the 376th, the Yugoslav's returned on November 16th to bomb hangars, administration buildings and parked aircraft at Eleusis Airdrome, northwest of Athens, Greece. It was from Eleusis that these same Yugoslav airmen escaped in their own planes when Axis troops over-ran Greece in the Spring of 1941. After receiving the Liberators from President Roosevelt, the Yugoslavs ferried them to Cairo, where King Peter officially accepted them on behalf of the Yugoslav exile government. They have fought honorably, bravely and have a distinguished war record. Never have they been called upon to fight against, or attack targets, in their own country. Their losses, for such a small air force, have been extremely heavy. Today only one Liberator remains of the four originally presented to them. The others have been lost in combat against the enemy.

For the benefit, the information, and the morale of those who follow in our footsteps, this condensed history of the 376th Bombardment Group (H) is intended. It is hoped that it may, in part, instill within those persons that common spirit of enthusiasm, devotion, and jealous regard for the honor of the group we now possess. The compilation of this booklet has not been officially ordered, or approved. It is not intended as eyewash, advertising or propaganda. On the contrary, it has been attempted solely for the express purpose of upholding and maintaining the high 'esprit de corps' which this group now enjoys. We have our traditions, our heroes, our honored dead. It is, therefore, to those honored dead that we respectfully dedicate this little history of the gallant 376th.

Captain Jack Preble

Public Relations Officer

The heavy bombardment group, now known as the 376th, comprising the 512, 513, 514 and 515th squadrons, were originally designated as a special task force under the command of Colonel Harry Halverson. The organization was composed of 231 officers and men with a complement of 23 B-24 Liberator bombers. They were assembled at Fort Meyers, Florida, to take off on a remarkable flight---the ultimate destination of which was unknown. Early dawn on the morning of May 20, 1942, saw this hand-picked task force wheel their heavily loaded aircraft into the rising sun. Sixty-five flying hours later the entire fleet of these "Flying Stone Crushers; (as they have been so described by many who have seen them at work), descended June 4th upon the airdrome at Fayid, Egypt. Without the loss of a single hour of flying time, or man, all 23 bombers completed the hazardous journey across the waters of the Atlantic, the fever-ridden swamps and jungles of the Gold Coast, then on into the dry, hot highlands of the Sudan. Thence, they winged on to the land of the ancient Pharoahs. Over 8000 miles of difficult, treacherous and uncharted flying was