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NOV/DEC

Dakota Territory Air Museum's P-47 Update

by Chuck Cravens



AIRCORPS AVIATION



The wing takes shape as more ribs are added.



www.dakotaterritoryairmuseum.com



Update

The wings and landing gear received the most attention this month.

Because the wing is a semi elliptical planform, each rib is unique and has to be fitted individually. Rob and Randy have been assembling the wing components as the guys in the fab shop produce the parts.

Lance has been working on the various functional mechanisms that cause the landing gear to shorten as they are retracted.

Wing Parts

The complex wings of the P-47 require hundreds of parts, and almost every one of these are unique in shape and size. Duplicate parts are only found in a mirrored layout of the opposite wing. The fabrication guys have to work rapidly to keep up with the progress of the wing assembly.



Nose rib assemblies on a bench await installation.



Steve works at fabricating a wing angle brace.



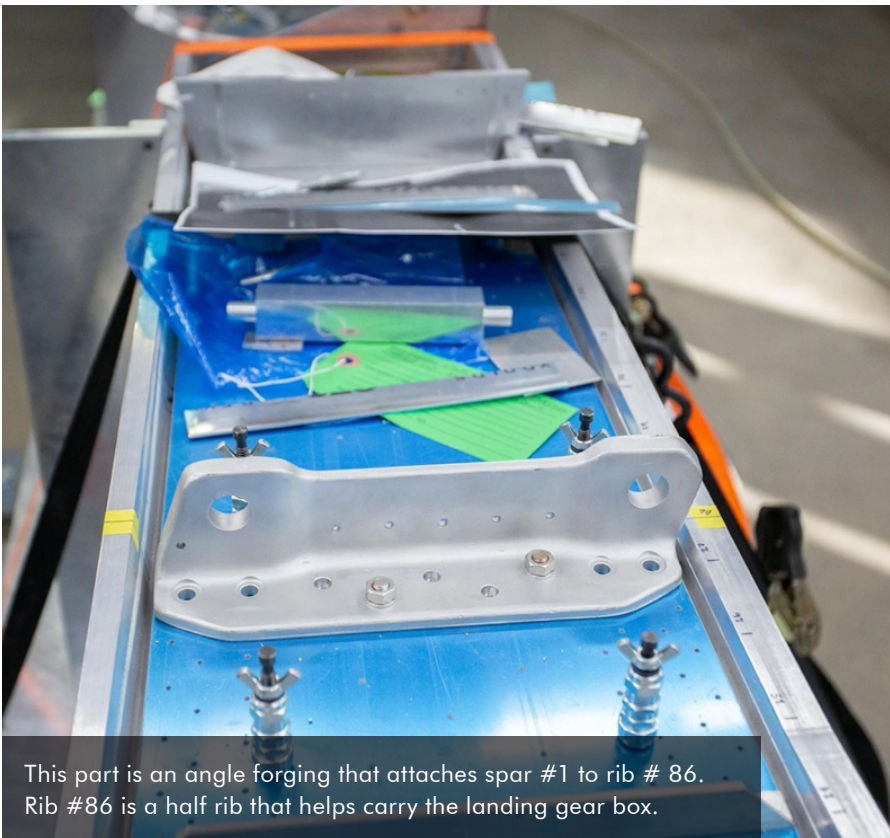
He looks pretty happy with the results!



These are spar reinforcement angles that strengthen spar #1 at station 26 $\frac{3}{4}$.



There are some interesting parts on this shelf. The furthest left is the wing jack pad. The two parts that resemble box end wrenches are the handle assemblies for the armament doors. The horseshoe shaped part is the wing mooring lug. The piece closest to the foreground edge of the shelf is the gun tunnel reinforcement for spar #1 - Quite the selection!



This part is an angle forging that attaches spar #1 to rib # 86. Rib #86 is a half rib that helps carry the landing gear box.



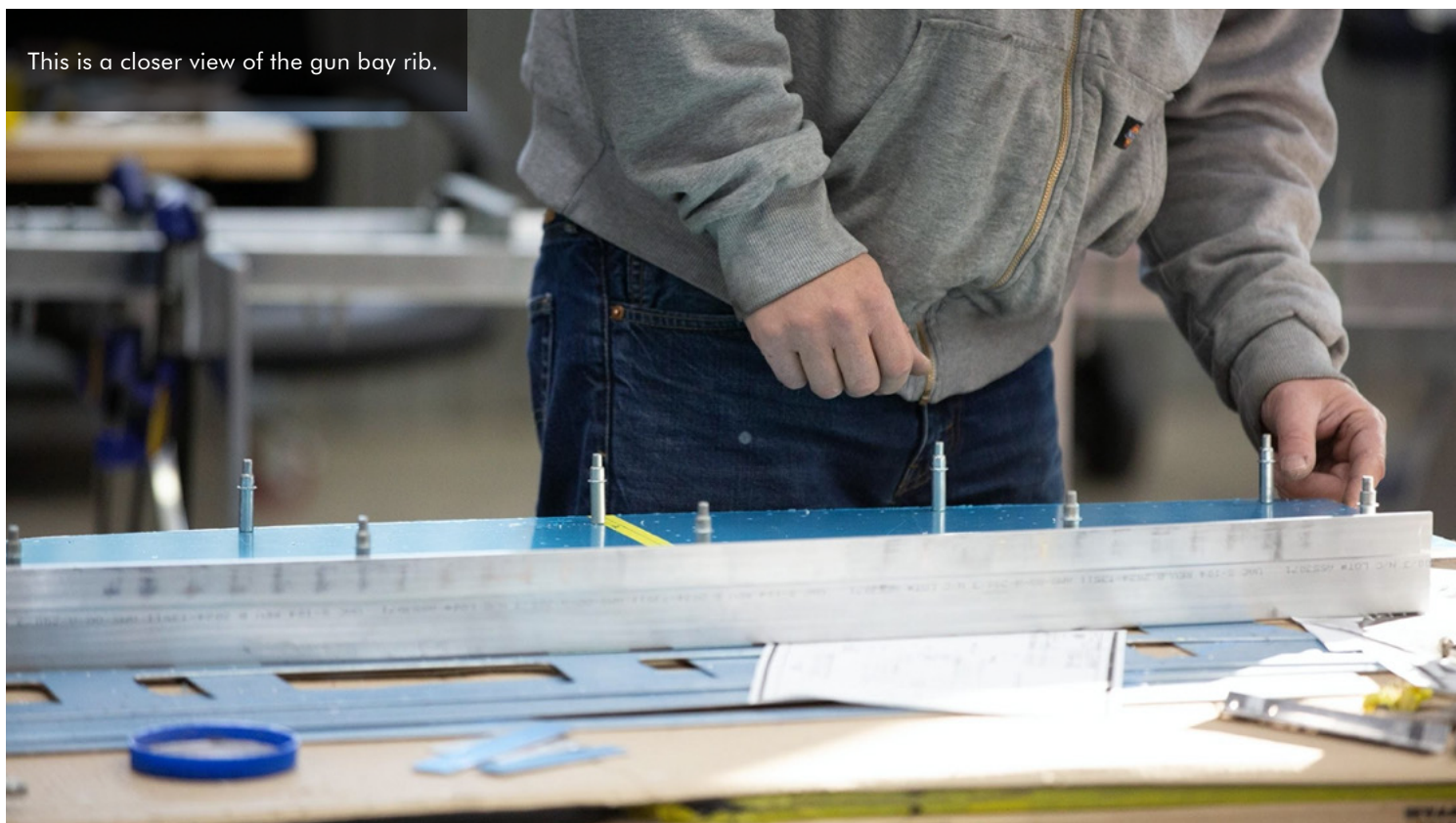
Randy is marking an auxiliary spar assembly that reinforces the landing gear box mounting area of the wing.



Robb works on clecoing a gun bay rib.



This is a closer view of the gun bay rib.

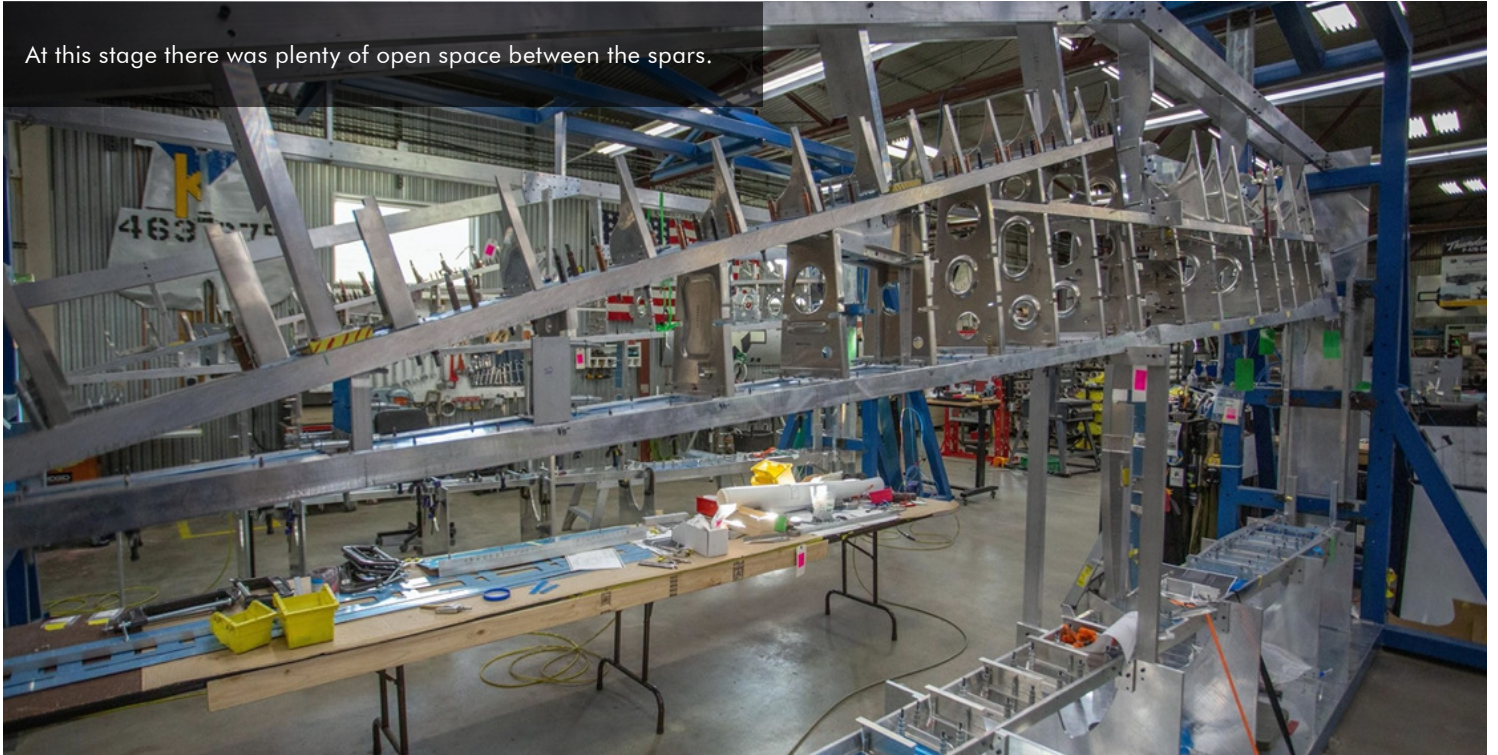




Wing Assembly

The fixtures hold the wing perfectly aligned as more and more components go into place between the spars. It was fun to watch the progression as the open spaces between the spars were filled in over the course of the month.

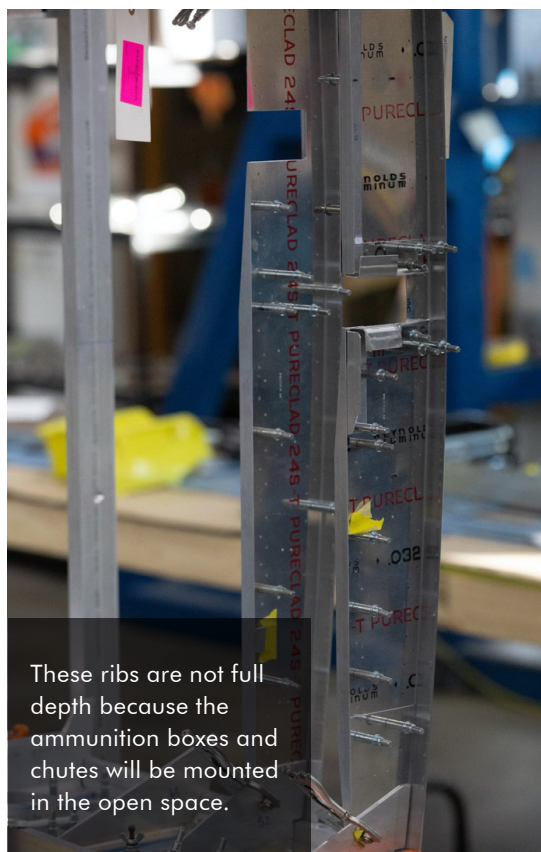
At this stage there was plenty of open space between the spars.



This view is from the root end of the wing.



The aileron will fit toward the upper left of the photo and the flap on the right.



These ribs are not full depth because the ammunition boxes and chutes will be mounted in the open space.



The rib sections shown here are just behind the ammunition boxes.

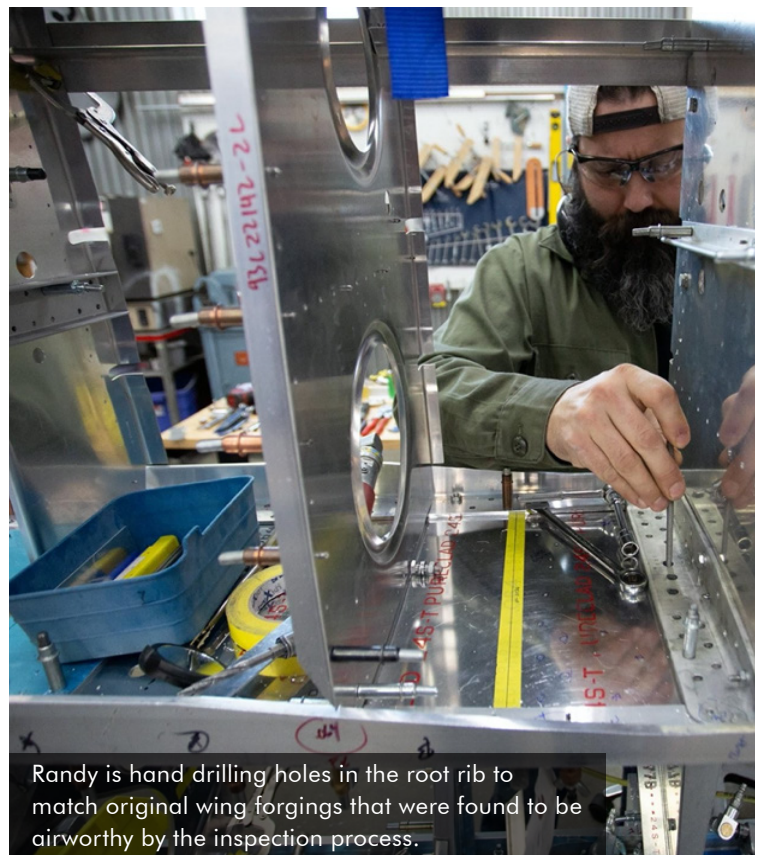




The rib sections with the curved ends facing the top of the image are shaped that way to accommodate the leading edge of the flaps.



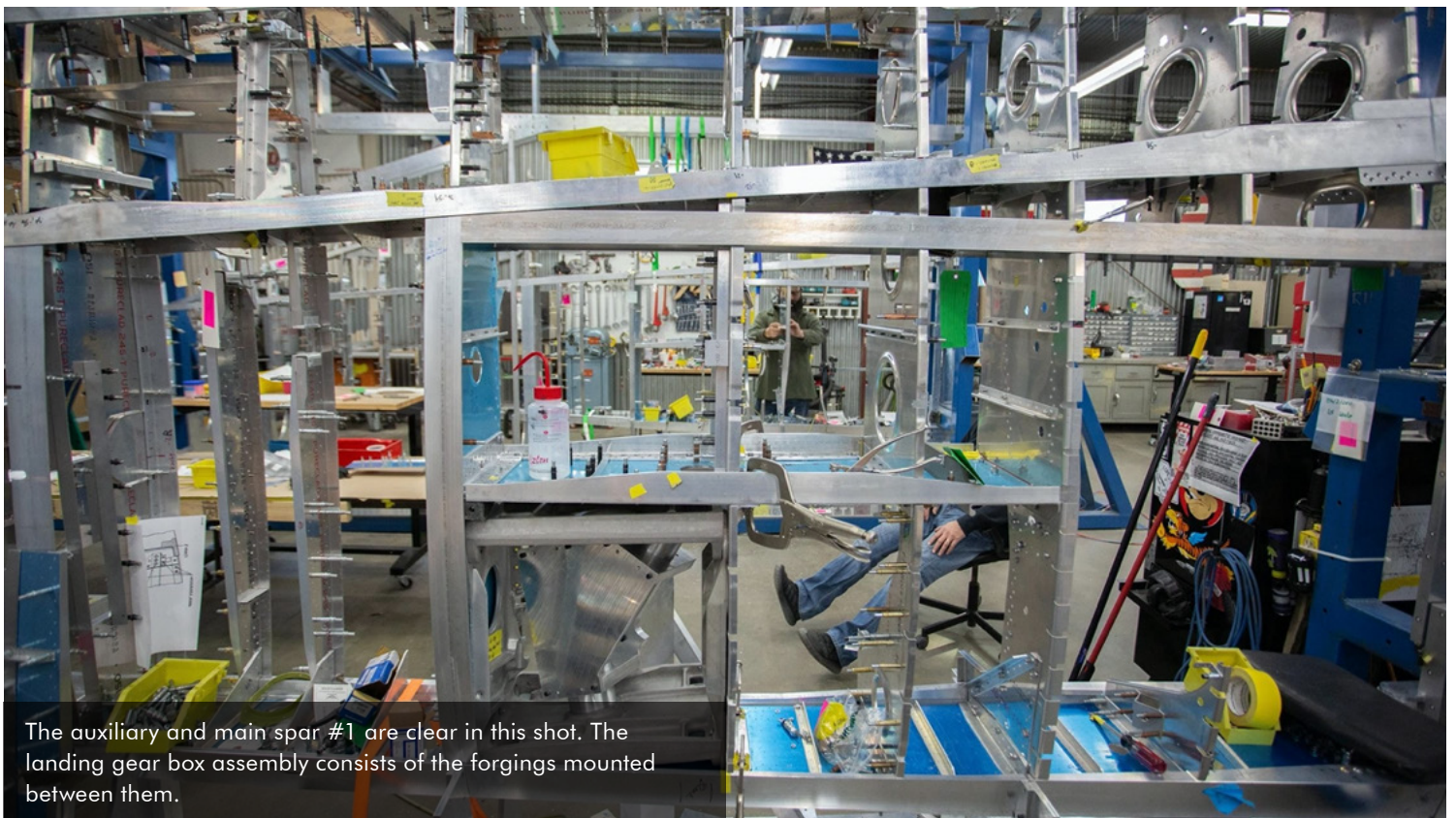
This photo shows the bottom side of the ribs at the ammo box stations.



Randy is hand drilling holes in the root rib to match original wing forgings that were found to be airworthy by the inspection process.



The landing gear downlock brackets mount on each side of the horseshoe shaped opening.



The auxiliary and main spar #1 are clear in this shot. The landing gear box assembly consists of the forgings mounted between them.



The curved aluminum landing gear box mounting fixture attachment holds everything in alignment as matching holes are drilled through the landing gear box into the mounting area.



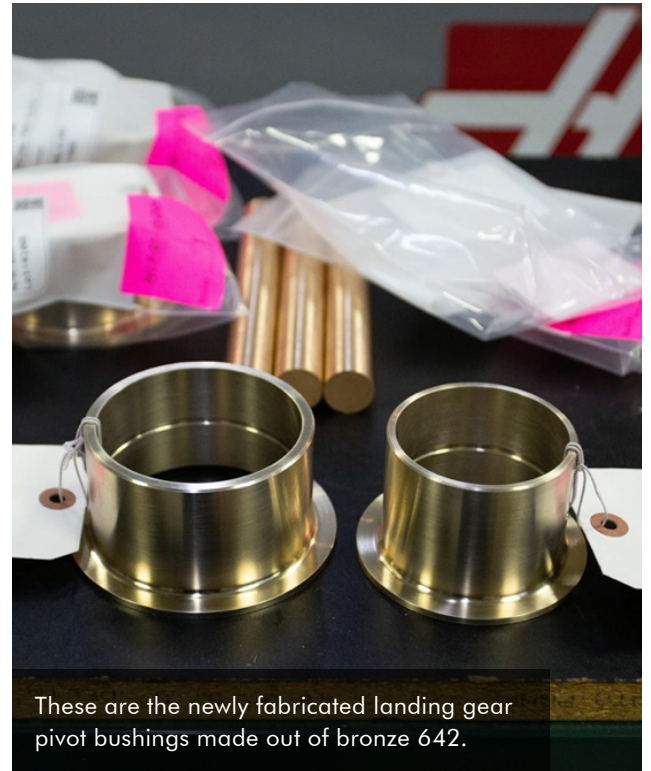
Over the course of the month, much of the space between the main spars has been filled with rib sections and landing gear box reinforcements.





Landing Gear

Lance is removing the landing gear transfer valve. This valve releases hydraulic fluid pressure to allow the gear leg to “shrink” or shorten during the retraction.



These are the newly fabricated landing gear pivot bushings made out of bronze 642.



The pivot bushings fit between the tubular pivot on the left side of the landing gear strut, and the landing gear mounting box.



The Fifth Air Force's August and Early September 1944 Missions

In the June/July update we began listing the missions the 5th Air Force flew during 42-27609's combat career.

The September/October update delineated the missions flown from July 1st through August 15th, 1944.

This month will be the final installment of missions that the Fifth Air Force flew during the period that 42-27609 was available for combat in Papua New Guinea. This final period is from August 16, 1944 to September 18, 1944, the date that 42-27609 was removed from service at Dobodura.

As before, the listed information below is taken directly from a publication of the Center for Air Force History, Kit Carter and Robert Mueller's *Combat Chronology 1941-1945*.

Spellings and abbreviations are as used in the original publication.



GEORGE KENNEY

photo credit: Wikimedia Commons

(Note that on 15 June, 1944 the 5th Air Force was incorporated into the Far East Air Force (FEAF). FEAF was formed with jurisdiction over the Fifth and Thirteenth AFs with General Kenney in overall command.)

8/17/44 FEAF B-24's pound A/Fs on Amboina, Ceram and Boeroe Is. B-25's strafe installations at Dili, on Moloe, and in NW Kai Is. MBs sink transport vessel off Halmahera I. A-20's bomb Klamono oil fields while FBs hit gun positions, storage areas, and other tgts at Ransiki and Manokwari and troop concentrations along N shore of MacCluer Gulf. On Biak P-40's, supporting ground forces landing at Wardo, pound shore positions and troops inland as enemy remnants on Biak break up into small groups. P-39's strafe troops from Cape Wom to Dandriwad R and near But, and hit gun positions at Marubian.

8/18/44 FEAF FBs and A-20's pound troops and storage area at Suain and hit def lines near Sarmi. Armed rcn missions continue over wide stretches of SWPA including Amboina-Ceram, Palau Is, and Halmahera I. Several T/Os are attacked.



8/20/44 FEAF B-24's bomb town and A/F of Namlea. B-25's bomb Langgoer A/F. B-24's pound personnel areas and warehouses at Tobelo. P-39's hit Windissi and enemy shipping off Manokawri while P-40's pound gun positions, buildings and stores at Manokwari.

Other P-40's spt ground forces by hitting troop concentrations at Napido. A-20's and FBs hit personnel center near Marubian, supplies at Wom, and numerous tgts during coastal sweeps in Wewak general area.

8/21/44 FEAF B-24's blast supply dumps and AA guns on Wasile Bay coast. B-25's hit Kaoe A/F and town. B-25's hit villages and supply areas on Karakelong I. FBs blast warehouses and other tgts in Manokwari area. A-20's and FBs hit supply dumps in SawarSarmi sector and attack troops along the coast, particularly from Babiang to Luain.

8/22/44 FEAF FBs continue to blast supply and personnel tgts in Manokwari and surrounding areas. FBs again hit N coastal New Guinea areas, including shipping facilities at Wewak, barge terminal on Mushu I, and trains and troop positions at various coastal points.

8/23/44 FEAF B-24's pound Galela area and Langgoer A/F and Saumlakki. FBs hit A/F at Nabire, Moemi, and Urarom, village of Moari, and town of Manokwari. B-25's, A-20's, and FBs continue to attack barge hideouts, troops, villages, and general T/Os around Wewak.

8/26/44 FEAF B-24's bomb Koror and Peleliu A/Fs. Other B-24's bomb Haroekoe and Liang A/Fs. A-20's in close ground spt hit troop concentrations in the Sarmi sector. FBs hit T/Os in Wewak and Suain areas. P39's maintain patrols over W shore of Geelvink Bay.

8/27/44 FEAF FBs hit Miti and A/Fs at Babo, Ransiki, Sagan, and Manokwari. FBs hit bivouacs near Boram, troops between Abau and Boikin, and a fuel dump and barges at Kairiru I.

8/28/44 FEAF B-24's hit Koror, A/F on Peleliu, and seaplane base on Arakabesan. FBs hit Kokas, vessels off Point Karakra, barracks at Nabire, storage facilities at Moemi and Manokwari and Boram fuel dumps. A-20's and FBs attack small vessels along E coast of Ceram.

8/29/44 FEAF B-24's bomb Koror, Malakal, seaplane base on Arakabesan, and supply area N of Ngesebus A/F. B24's bomb barracks at Amboina and P-38's hit seaplane base at Halong.

8/30/44 FEAF Koror and Malakal are pounded by B-24's. B-24's hit Wasile Bay storage and personnel areas while B-25's make low-level attack on Kaoe town. P-38's bomb oil tanks, barracks, and AA positions at Boela. P-47's hit Urarom runway and Manokwari storage area, P-38's bomb A/Fs at Babo and Ransiki, and P-39's hit T/Os along W coast of Geelvink Bay.

9/1/44 FEAF 50-plus B-24's bomb Sasa, Matina, and Likanan A/Fs. Others, failing to reach Mindanao, hit Beo. FBs hit Boela and A/F at Amahai. A-20's, P-40's and B-25's bomb runways at Babo and Urarom.

9/2/44 FEAF B-24's operating in strength bomb warehouses at Lasang, shipyards and personnel areas at Bunawan, and A/F at Likanan. B-25's hit warehouses and shipyards along Lembeh Strait, while other B-26's hit position near Pitoe A/F on S Morotai I. B-24's bomb Koror. FBs hit Sorong area and forces at Cape Pus and Boikin.

9/3/44 FEAF B-24's pound Langoan A/F and Lembeh Strait warehouses and shipping. B-25's hit village of Tobelo. FBs hit Babo, Waren and Nabire A/ Fs, Manokwari storage and personnel areas, strafe areas along MacCluer Gulf, and fly coastal sweeps in Wewak area, strafing troops, supplies, and occupied areas. FBs hit oil tanks and radio station at Boela.



A crewman servicing the accessory section of a P-47. These men, working in the open in tropical conditions are surely among the unsung heroes of the SW Pacific war. Official USAAC photo

9/4/44 FEAF Bad weather cancels most large-scale operations. A-20's and B-26's hit Urarom A/F and FBs attack Moemi and hit Napido. During 4/5 Sep B-24's bomb Kendari A/F.

9/4/44 FEAF B-24's hit Peleliu A/F, a few bombing Saipan. Small-scale B-24 strikes hit Kendari A/F while FBs attack Galela and nearby villages, Soepiori Peninsula villages and Waren and Moemi A/Fs. Almost 60 B-24's blast Langoan A/F while a sizeable B-25 force bombs Djailolo A/F, several villages, and Kaoe AA positions.

9/6/44 FEAF B-24's pound Santa Ana port. B-25's bomb Buayan A/F in the first MB raid in Phil Is since early 1942. Several B-24's, turning back from the Santa Ana strike,

bomb Rainis. B-25's hit Galela and S coast of Morotai while FBs hit Kaoe A/F and bomb Djailolo runway. A-20's, B-25's, and FBs hit A/Fs at Manokwari, Moemi, Ransiki, and Waren, and stores and personnel area at Nabire. P-40's attack S Soepiori I and Napido. Other P-39's strafe barges and huts at Suain.

9/7/44 FEAF B-24's pound Menado area and B-25's hit Wasile Bay villages. Other B-24's strike Galela in force while P-38's dive-bomb Djailolo A/F. A-20's bomb Boela A/F and B-25's sink lugger in Bara Bay. A-20's hit Mongosah A/F while FBs hit Manokwari airstrip and villages in Schouten Is and strafe and bomb Wewak A/F and surrounding areas.



B-24s enroute to a SW Pacific target. USAAF photo

9/8/44 FEAF B-24's pound Langoan A/F. B-25's hit Galela and Tobelo while B-24's bomb Lolobata and P-47's attack Kaoe A/F and AA positions, Djailolo A/F and barges at Point Lelo. B-24's bomb A/Fs at Langgoer, Faan, Letfoean, and Toeal. P-38's hit Boela while B-25's hit small shipping at Ceram. FBs and A-20's hit airstrips and T/Os at Efman, Samate, Babo, Urarom, Manokwari, Moemi, and Ranski. P-39's strafe Wewak coastal area.

9/9/44 FEAF B-24's bomb Mapanget A/F. More than 100 FBs and A-20's pound A/Fs at Liang, Haroekoe, Boela, and Namlea. FBs hit Moemi, Manokwari, and Ranski airstrips while B-25's hit Babo A/F. B-24's hit Galela A/F.

9/10/44 FEAF B-24's pound A/Fs at Langoan and Mapanget and hit Tomohon and waterfront area of Menado. Lolobata and Hate Tabako A/Fs are bombed and areas along Wasile Bay strafed. MBs, A-20's, and P38's hit A/Fs and oil storage at Namlea, Amahai, and

Boela while B-24's hit Laha A/F. A-20's and ftrs hit A/Fs at Samate, Sagan, Nabire, Urarom, Manokwari, Moemi, and Ranski.

9/11/44 FEAF B-24's hit A/Fs at Galela and Miti. B-25's bomb Kairatoe A/F and village and Boela A/F while P-38's hit A/Fs at Namlea and Amahai and oil tanks at Boela. A-20's and B-25's hit Kaoe A/F and scattered T/Os. A-20's strike Otawiri, Sagan, Nabire, and Urarom A/Fs while FBs hit A/Fs and AA guns at Manokwari and Ranski.

9/12/44 FEAF B-24's pound 3 A/Fs in Menado area. B-24's and B-25's bomb Kaoe and Galela, A/Fs, and radar facilities on Morotai I. B-24's hit Lautem. P-38's dive-bomb Namlea runways while P-47's hit Boela. A-20's, B-25's, and FBs hit A/Fs, AA guns, and other tgts at Babo, Mongosah, Manokwari, Sagan, Moemi, and Samate.



9/13/44 FEAF B-24's and B-25's hit 4 A/Fs and bomb villages on Morotai I. B-25's hit Langgoer A/F while A-20's and FBs hit 2 A/Fs in Efman I. A-20's, B-25's, and FBs hit Babo AA positions and A/Fs at Manokwari and Ransiki

9/14/44 FEAF B-25's pound Mapanget airstrip on Menado area. B-24's hit 4 A/Fs on Halmahera. A-20's and B-25's bomb Babo A/F while FBs make scattered small raids on AA positions, A/Fs, and T/Os on Vogelkop Peninsula.

9/15/44 FEAF B-24's, A-20's, and P-47's bomb Kaoe, Lolobata, and Hate Tabako. P-39's bomb Manokwari A/F and town area.

9/16/44 FEAF B-24's bomb Kendari air depot and Ambesia A/F while B-25's attack large warehouse at Gorontalo. B25's and B-24's pound Namlea, Liang, Haroekoe, Kairatoe, Laha, and Kamarian. FBs hit Manokwari, Sagan, Moemi, and Waren airstrips.

9/17/44 FEAF B-25's bomb Buayoan A/F B-24's, B-25's, and P-38's hit Langoan A/F. B-25's and P-39's, fighting bad weather, attack a variety of tgts, including A/Fs and villages in Amboina-Ceram area. P-47's and P40's pound Samate A/F.

9/18/44 FEAF B-24's blast several tgts in Davao area, including oil storage at Sasa. B-25's hit Langoan A/F and lake area. Others hit Samate A/F. Bad weather forces B-24's over Ceram-Amboina area to individually attack tgts which include 4 A/Fs. FBs hit A/F and town of Manokwari and AA guns at Moemi.



P-47s at the Evansville, Indiana factory.
Photo courtesy of Harold Morgan