

# The Raven - Those Who Served

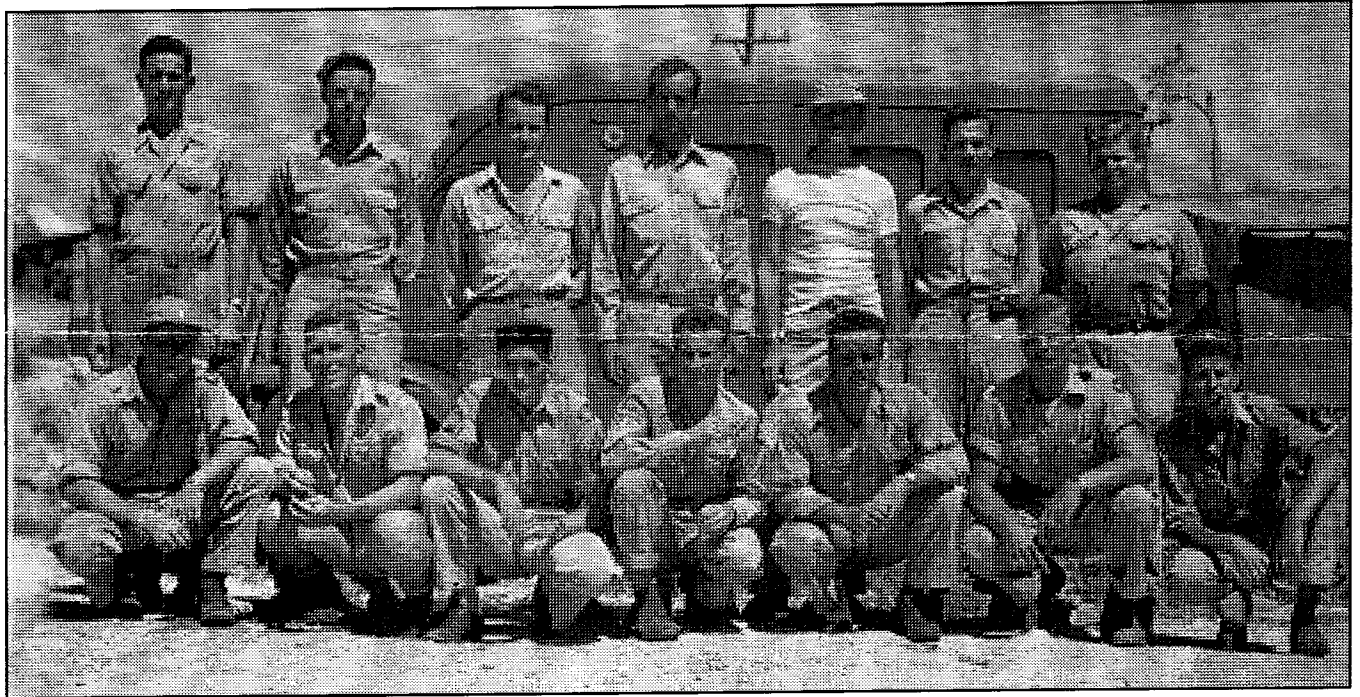


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## Radar CounterMeasures Personnel, 90th Bomb Group (H) B-24's, Mokmer Afl, Biak Is., SWPA, November 1944

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### Front Row L > R

Walter E. Spindler, OIC	RCM Observer
Richard Dakeyne, RAAF	RCM Observer
Harry E. Fullerton	RCM Operator
Emerick	RCM Operator
Shehorn	RCM Operator
Arnold N. Martinsen	RCM Observer
William H. W. Semple	RCM Observer
Edward D. Rogers	RCM Observer*

### Rear Row L > R

Bland Sandlin	RCM Mechanic
Barnes	RCM Mechanic
Joel K. Butler	RCM Operator
Duncan Longcope	RCM Mechanic
Claude V. Stevenson	RCM Operator
Charles W. Dowse	RCM Operator
Irvin C. Young	RCM Operator

\*not available for photo.

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### The Making of an RCM Officer in WWII . . . by Bill Semple

September 29, 1942 I was drafted in Kent, Washington. This created personal problems for me as my father, who served in WWI I as a

Captain, died of his war injuries the previous year. This left my mother a widow with a very small income. My Private's pay was not much help.

From Kent, I was sent to Fort Lewis where I was outfitted with a

uniform and other basic equipment, which made me feel like I was in the Army. After a few days, I was enjoying a train ride to Jefferson Barracks, MO. Here, more time and effort were spent trying to make me feel at home in the Army with little success.



## Bill Semple, October 1944

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It was here they discovered I had been an Amateur Radio Operator, **W7FBJ**. This discovery seemed to shape my military career. I soon shipped off to Scott Field, IL (The home of the Radio Operators & Mechanics School).

While at Scott I became more familiar with the Army while completing radio school. I was still confused and wondering what my fate was. I left Scott Field, no longer a Private First Class, but with a new title, Communications Cadet.

On arrival at Boca Raton Field, FL it was more training. This time security was tight. We studied

behind barbed wire with an armed guard at the gate. We could take no written material outside the school compound. The schooling became more difficult and demanding. It seemed as if my background had been checked.

I was finally headed in a definite direction.

I completed training and moved on to Yale University. Still more training. At Yale I was commissioned a 2nd Lt. I received a clearance for classified documents and was on my way back to Boca Raton.

This time it was Boca Raton Club. What a change from Army barracks. A beautiful place but the pressure was still on us to whip us into shape. On completion we were awarded Aircraft Observer wings as RCM Observers.

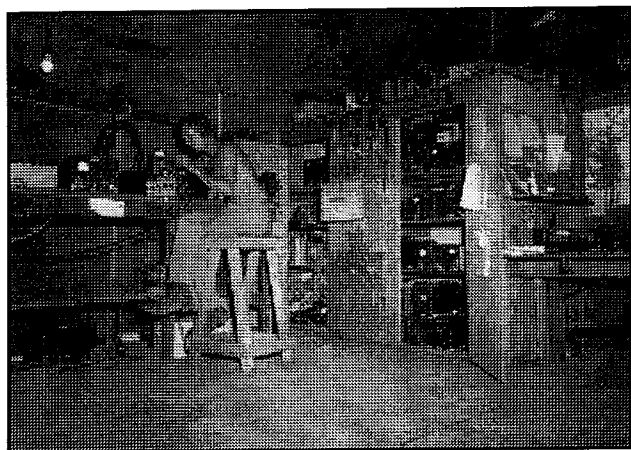
Next to Eglin Field, FL, Field No. 9, with quarters at Florosa (on the Gulf) for more flight training. I received a pass to go home to Seattle. On arrival, there was a telegram to report to Eglin Field immediately.

I was now on my way overseas with Arne "Skip" Martinsen, leaving from Camp Stoneman, CA. We spent 32 days aboard the US Military Transport "Republic," before landing at Hollandia, New Guinea. We were assigned to Section 22, GHQ, with TDY to Field Unit # 2, 90th Bomb Group (B-24s), as full-fledged Aircraft Observers-(Radar Observer-RCM). We received orders 13 Sept 1944 ordering us to proceed to Biak. Authorizing us to Travel by Military Aircraft, Army, or Naval Transport, belligerent vessel, or aircraft. Govt Motor Atzd." Didn't realize I was that important?

Arriving at Biak and the 90th

Bomb Group, I learned we were replacements for **Walt Spindler Jr and Ed Rogers**. They brought us up to speed before departing for the States.

At this time, as many B-24s as possible in the Group were equipped with mounting racks for receivers and jammers. The operating position was in the nose of the B-24. The equipment was removed after every flight and kept in a heated cabinet in the shop because of the high humidity. Also, due to the limited number of equipment, we had to place the equipment into those B-24s flying the next mission. All aircraft were not equipped with ATR racks, power source, and antennas.



**Bland Sandlin**, RCM Mechanic working on Equipment, RCM Shop, 90th B.Gp.

First combat flights are always interesting. Mine is no exception. It was over "Kendari" in the Celebes that I discovered there are no "foxholes" in the nose of a B-24.

All bombing missions were covered by either Skip or myself. Full reports were filed as to radar frequency heard and/or jammed. The men in the group did an excellent job....maintaining equipment, installing equipment as required for

the missions, flying the missions, and preparing reports. Flights were long and very tiring. RCM personnel were exposed to the same hazards as the aircrew.

**Radar CounterMeasures** was secret, not understood, and under utilized. We functioned as if we were a part of the 90th Bomb Group. When they went on a mission, we went with them.

January 7, 1945 Skip left the 90th Bomb Group. He went to the 22nd Bomb Group, at Anguar Field, Palaus Islands to establish an RCM capability. As Skip was not replaced, he was missed very much. For this and other reasons I initiated a training program for the enlisted men, to put any who could qualify, on flying status. A very successful program.

Whenever the 90th moved, we went with them, to Mindoro, and then Ie Shima.



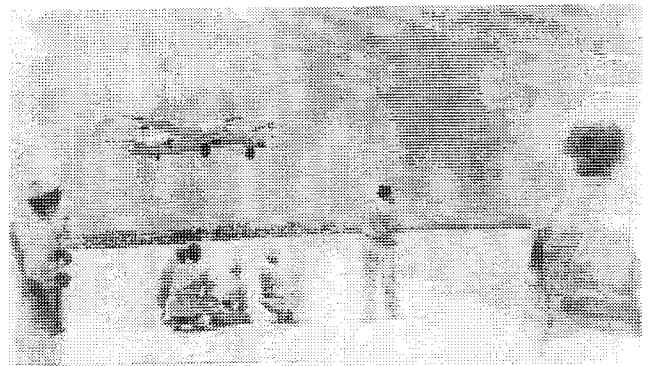
**Edward F. Vidro Jr.**, a scientific consultant created a new dimension in our work by designing and installing direction finding antennas for the planes in the Group. This gave us the ability to more accurately locate enemy radar sites. The accuracy of the navigator's log greatly effected the results. At this time I felt that

Radar CounterMeasures was better understood and used. Whatever success Field Unit # 2 enjoyed was due to the efforts of the following personnel; Emerick, Shehorn, Sandlin, Barnes, Butler, Longcope, Stevenson, Dowse, Young, and Dakeyne (RAAF) .

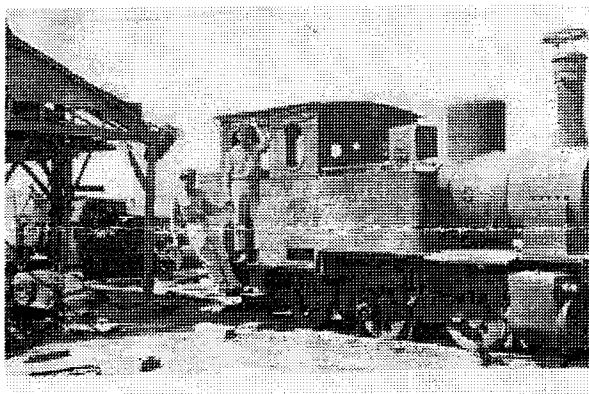
I have always felt the pioneers in RCM were not given the credit they deserved.

When the war ended, Field Unit # 2, was on Ie Shima. I flew a weather reconnaissance flight from Ie Shima to report weather over Tokyo. We ran out of gas on the way back. We landed ok, but had to be towed off the runaway. Had the feeling my luck was running out?

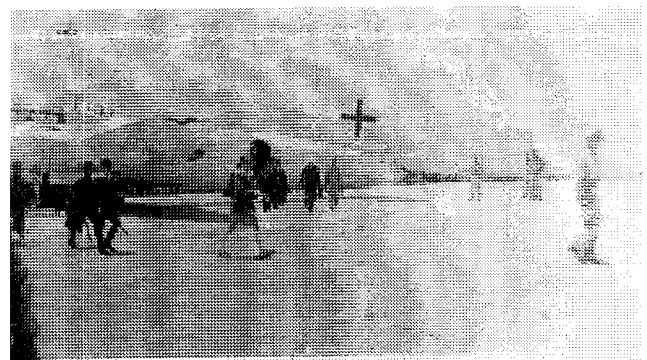
The Unit was disbanded. I got a ride back to Mather Field, CA courtesy of the 90th Bomb Group. From Mather it was back to home and civilian life. The circle is complete. Quite an adventure. 73's



Japanese Surrender Delegation landing in a "Betty," August 19, 1945, Ie Shima.



September 7, 1945 Naha Train Station Okinawa. Bill and "Skip" visiting the Island, while awaiting orders to return to the States.



Japanese Surrender Delegation walking over to U.S. Escort Team, August 19, 1945 Ie Shima.