

Robert L. Stone press release interview with Army Air Forces

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ARMY AIR FORCES, PACIFIC HEADQUARTERS — In what Second Lieutenant Robert L. Stone, Scarsdale, New York, bombardier of the 7th AAF Liberator, Flying Jenny, termed "the best raid from the standpoint of results", Jap installations on Iwo Jima Island took a thorough pasting.

The Flying Jenny, member of a squadron of 7th AAF Liberators, first flew over the island and dropped bombs on airfield installations, airplane dispersal areas and gun positions, causing explosions and large fires.

"We sort of paved the way," said Lieutenant Stone. "The bombs we dropped created plenty of destruction, wrecking Jap planes [*sic*] parked on the ground and setting them afire."

After Lieutenant Stone's squadron hit the target area along came B-29 Superforts to drop more bombs. Later another squadron of 7th AAF Liberators, escorted [*sic*] by 7th AAF P-28 Lightning fighter planes, continued the attack. Then, in the afternoon warships stood off shore and poured shells onto the installations.

"We've been pounding Iwo Jima to prevent the Japs from sending out planes to raid the Superfort base on Saipan," Lieutenant Stone explained. "We've kept the runways so punched full of holes that the Japs are unable to send up planes to threaten B-29 operations.

On another mission to Iwo Jima the Flying Jenny became separated from the formation in an overcast. It was so cold that ice formed on the plane. The Flying Jenny, on emerging from the overcast, was attacked by Jap fighters, escaped and dropped its bombs on the island and returned to base.

"It was about 14 below," Lieutenant Stone declared. "We picked up sheets of ice on the leading edges of the wings and the cowlings. The nose was iced up so that the gunner couldn't see out of it. We broke out of the overcast and there were three Jap fighters sitting and waiting for us.

"Each made a pass at us but did no damage. We dived back into the overcast to escape the fighters, and three or four minutes later popped out of it to find
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the island right below us. We dropped the bombs and headed back to the base."

Lieutenant Stone, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Stone, reside at 35 Cushman Road, Scarsdale, was graduated from Deerfield Academy in 1940 and attended Williams College. He has flown 22 combat missions to Yap, Haha Jima, Chichi Jima, in addition to Iwo Jima.

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