

July 1945 Form 540

358 Squadron

(Note: Initial, as typed draft transcription)

Place	Date	Time	Summary of events
RAF Station	July 1945		
			I – Operations
	1		Five crews and aircraft of No.159 Squadron arrived for participation in S.D. operations from this Base. A short course in dropping supplies was given by crews from this Squadron. The detachment will commence operations on 3rd July 1945.
	2		Information received from H.Qs. 906 Wing, R.A.F., that Liberator SD/VI EW925 (Capt – F/O. Outram) has landed at Hmawbi, at 0810 hours 1st July, due to fuel shortage. This aircraft dropped load of six 'bodies' at approx. 0340 hours on 1st July 1945, also F/O. W. N. Cook (166005) G.D.(G) baled out at the same time in an area of 30 miles radius of co-ordinates 14°09' N - 105°10' E. after the aircraft had been attacked for over 2 hours by three enemy Oscars. The load was jettisoned at approx. 0340 hours. The aircraft was not hit and the crew sustained no injuries. It was reported that approx. 3000 japs are concentrated in the same area.
	3		All aircrew on training and revision for categorisation, commenced today and to be carried on up to the 6th July 1945.
	7		Operation Order No. 97
	9		Training: Questionnaire on training syllabus for categorisation started.
	10		Operation Order No. 98
			Liberator HB/VI. (SD) KH365 (Capt – F/O. E. T. J. Manning) E.T.A. Base 18.55 hours. Overdue. Signals were picked up and a position roughly due S. of Base was given. It was established later today that the A/c. must have crashed near the position given 21.50N 98.22E, and H.Qs. 231 Group ordered a search to be made.
	11		Operations Order No. 99 – Sea Search for Missing Liberator KH365.
			A search by No. 292 Squadron aircraft was carried out and in area 2050N 8930E – 2050N 9040E – 2125N 9040E – 2125N 89.30E. One Catalina A/c and 3 Liberators of 240 Squadron searched area 2050N-8850E – 2050N-8940E – 2125N-8940E – 2125N-8850E. Two aircraft of the Squadron also searched the same area (See Ops. Order No.99). The wreckage was located by a Catalina and several of the crew were seen. Apparently the aircraft had only just succeeded in making landfall over the Bay of Bengal.
	12		Operation Order No. 100
			Information received from HQs. 231 Group. that all the crew were alive and being transferred today to No. 9 R.A.F. General Hospital for treatment. It is understood that the Captain, F/O. Manning and the Rear gunner, Sgt. Drummond were badly injured.
			Crew:
			F/O. E. T. J. Manning (185967) Capt. NZ.33805 F/S. T. W. Wallis A/G
			F/O. R. A. James (165942) 2nd. P. 1574010 Sgt. A. M. Drummond Rear A/G
			F/O. J. Willcock (166350) Nav. 1697939 Sgt. J. M. Mclvor R/Eng
			1079678 Sgt. F. Wareing A/B 1672616 Sgt. G. Smith 1st WOP/A
			1600891 F/Sgt. W. E. C. Eaton 2nd.WOP.
	14		Training: Categorisation of all aircrew completed after final examinations.
	15		Operation Order No. 101
	17		Liberator HB/VI (D.D) EW274 and crew detailed for a night cross country training flight, took off from Jessore airfield at 21.08 hrs. I.S.T. almost immediately after

		take off, lost height and crashed into trees about 1500 yard off the South end of the runway. The aircraft burst into flames on impact with the ground and was a complete write off (Category E.O. Burnt – Total). All the crew, as named under, were killed.
		656622 W/O. D. J. Sims Capt. 1587729 Sgt. L. J. Boase 2nd P.
		1806307 Sgt. J. Freeman Nav. 166168 F/O. G. C. Mayhew GD(A/B)
		1567890 Sgt. R. Bryson WOP/A 1597743 Sgt. F. A. Cooper A/G
		F/O. W. P. Thomas (J.45162) GD(Nav) – Attached S.H.Q., Jessore, from H.Qs 184 Wing.
	18	All the above personnel were interred in the European Cemetery, Jessore, Bengal, at 1630 on 18th July with full service honours. The ceremony was conducted by the Station C of E Padre S/L. (Rev) John Scott.
		Operation Order No. 102
	20	Operation Order No. 103
	21	Operation Order No. 104
	22	Operation Order No. 105
	23	Operation Order No. 106
	24	Operation Order No. 107
	26	Operation Order No. 108
	27	Operation Order No. 109
	28	Liberator HB/VI.(SD) KH160 (Capt F/O. D. C. L. Kearns) returned from operations with about 3 or 4 feet of the starboard wing missing and with extensive damage to the port fin. It appears that the aircraft had hit a tree when climbing out of the D.Z which was situated in a 'Cuff' in the hills. Maps show a valley leading out which could not be checked due to cloud. After dropping the load the capt. flew for this valley but to his consternation, was confronted with a fairly high tree-covered Saddle. In climbing over this, the aircraft struck a tree, and despite the damage successfully reached base. Five of the crew were ordered to bale out over Base and the captain made a good landing
	30	Operation Order No. 110
		Information received from Controller, H.Qs, 231 Group the F/O. W. N. Cook, who baled out of Liberator EW925 on 2nd July last, is now safe. Further particulars being forwarded.
		Operational Summary for July 1945
		With a large percentage of new crews coming into the Squadron to replace tour expired personnel, operations were almost completely suspended for the first 14 days while a training programme was carried out. During this period a flight of 159 Squadron was attached and took over part of 358's operational commitments during this period.
		On resuming operations 358 Squadron crews found monsoonal conditions in full play throughout most areas concerned, but despite this the monthly percentage of successes was the highest yet achieved by the Squadron.
		Returning from an operation on the night of the 10th, A/C 'N' captained by F/O. Manning was unable to make base and, running out of fuel force-landed in a mangrove swamp on the coast in the Sunderbunds. F/O. Manning brought off this landing with injury to only one other member of the crew, but in the impact a tree pierced the fuselage and injured his foot, so that subsequently, it was amputated. The crew was located and taken to Calcutta by an A.S.R. Catalina.
		After successfully completing operation "Harbage Aubergine 7" on the 28th F/O. Kearns (W/c. 'W') collided with trees on surrounding hills while climbing away from the D.Z. The outer section of the starboard wing was ripped off, but F/O. Kearns maintained control and brought the A/c back to base where he made a successful landing after five members of the crew had baled out over the aerodrome.
		W/O. Sims, a new captain, his crew of six and the Station Loran instructor (F/O.

		Thomas) were killed on the 17th when their Liberator crashed on taking off on a night cross country Loran training flight.
		Analysis of the month's operations"-
		Total sorties mounted 51
		Sorties completed 38 ½
		Percentage 75.9 completed.
		Uncompleted sorties 12 ½
		Reasons: Weather 5 ½
		No reception 3
		Technical 3
		Crashed 1
		Loads dropped Men 21
		Containers 366
		Packages 279
		Hours flown 531 hours 1 min.
		II – Administration
	9	Change of Command – Wing Commander E. C. Badcoe (GD(P).) D.F.C. and Bar, assumed Command of the Squadron, vice Wing Commander P. G. D. Farr, D.F.C. posted to H.Qs, 231 Group (wef.26.6.45)
		III – Personnel
	12	A very sad event happened to-day. It had been notified on the 11th that the 'A' Flight Commanders 15cwt. truck had been missing all day. A search was at once started to locate the vehicle. This morning, the vehicle was found, apparently abandoned, in a remote disused dispersal pen. In the back was found the body of A/F/Lt. K. W. Jones (175022) who had to all appearances shot himself with his own revolver. It is thought that this had happened late on the 10th instant. His body was interred with full service honours in the European Cemetery at Jessore (Map. Ref. 2311N 8911E) at 1630 hours today, the ceremony being conducted by the Station O.D. Padre, (S/L. (Rev) Coulthard.
		No reason can be offered for this extraordinary happening, which will be fully investigated, but it was noticed that F/Lt. Jones had not been in his usually high spirits for some days and had appeared depressed, although he had only just returned from a six week spell in the Hills at Kashmir.
	14	(111596) F/O. T. Reader (A&SD) Admin, arrived to take over the duties of Squadron Adjutant vice F/Lt. W. S. Wood due for repatriation to U.K.
	28	A/S/L. (F/Lt) L. V. Fayle (J.3997) arrived on posting from 355 Squadron to assume the command of 'B' Flight.
		IV – Honours and Awards.
		Congratulatory messages received from A.O.C., No.231 Group on the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to the undermention officers of the Squadron:-
		S/L. S. J. Pollock, G.D.(P) O.C. 'A' Flight (non-Immediate award)
		F/O. H. V. Smith (J.27671) G.D.(P) Canadian (Immediate award).
		V – General
	7	An E.N.S.A. Concert Party gave an amusing entertainment in the Station Canteen. This was a good show called "As you like it" and was greatly appreciated. It so much to be regretted that more shows from home are not available as these entertainments give an enormous uplift to morale.
	8	Air Marshal W. A. Corydon, C.G., M.V.O., D.F.C., Air Marshal Commanding Headquarters R.A.F Burma, visited and inspected the Station. He also inspected a Liberator of the Squadron which had been specially modified for S.D. work.

	28		Major General D. Stuart, DIE, OBe, G.O.C.,. No. 303 L of C Area visited the Squadron and saw a fully modified S.D. Liberator loaded and crewed for operations.
	29		His excellency General Sir Claud J. E. C.G.B., G???, GSI, DSO, OBE, ADC - Commander in Chief, India visited Jessore on a general inspection of the Camp.
	31		The following is the total posted strength at the end of the month.
			Officers S.N.C.Os B.O.Rs L.O.Rs. E/Followers
			119 268 447 19 67
			Summaries from Engineer, Navigation, Signals, Signals Leader, and Bombing Leader -- Appendix 15, 16, 17, 18 & 19.