



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

509th Composite Group Aircraft Photography

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2022

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	509th Composite Group Aircraft Photography
Date:	1945
Identifier:	NASM.1988.0027
Extent:	0.01 Cubic feet (8 photographs)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection consists of eight photographs of United States military aircraft taken sometime during 1945, probably at one of the US Army Air Forces fields on Tinian, in the Mariana Islands.
Digital Content:	Image(s): NASM-SI-88-551, "Tinian - North Field." Boeing B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay"; Mariana Islands, 1945.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Ed Mahaffey, gift, 1988, NASM.1988.0027

Processing Information

Arranged, described and encoded by Melissa A. N. Keiser, 2022.

Preferred Citation

509th Composite Group Aircraft Photography, Acc. NASM.1988.0027, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

In 1944, donor Ed Mahaffey was sent to Tinian, Mariana Islands, with the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) 77th Air Services Group as ground support for the Twentieth Air Force's Boeing B-29 Superfortress Program. The eight photographs in this collection (taken sometime in 1945) were sent to Mahaffey after his return to the U.S. in January 1946 by a friend in the 77th Air Services Group.

Scope and Contents

The collection includes four photographs of Boeing B-29 Superfortress bomber aircraft assigned to the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) 509th Composite Group: "Enola Gay" (which dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan), "Bockscar" (which dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki, Japan), and "The Great Artiste" (which flew as an observation aircraft on both atomic missions). Also included are photographs showing the aircraft nose art on two US Navy Consolidated PB4Y Liberators ("Lady Luck" and "Impatient Virgin") and views of two USAAF fighters (North American P-51 "Snortin Phyllie" and the burnt-out remains of a crashed Republic P-47 Thunderbolt). All photographs are believed to have been taken on Tinian in the Mariana Islands sometime during 1945, most likely at North Field.

Arrangement

The original photographs were copied in 1988 and assigned Smithsonian Institution negative numbers 88-547 through 88-554; images are presented online in negative number order. Original prints are stored by subject in the National Air and Space Museum Technical Reference Files, NASM.XXXX.1183.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics, Military
- World War, 1939-1945

Container Listing

NASM 88-547: [Wreckage of USAAF Republic P-47 Thunderbolt](#)

NASM 88-548: [USAAF North American P-51 Mustang "Snortin Phyllie"](#)

NASM 88-549: [US Navy Consolidated PB4Y Liberator "Lady Luck"](#)

NASM 88-550: [US Navy Consolidated PB4Y Liberator "Impatient Virgin"](#)

NASM 88-551: [USAAF Boeing B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay" \(1 of 2\)](#)

NASM 88-552: [USAAF Boeing B-29 Superfortress "Bockscar"](#)

NASM 88-553: [USAAF Boeing B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay" \(2 of 2\)](#)

NASM 88-554: [USAAF Boeing B-29A Superfortress "The Great Artiste"](#)