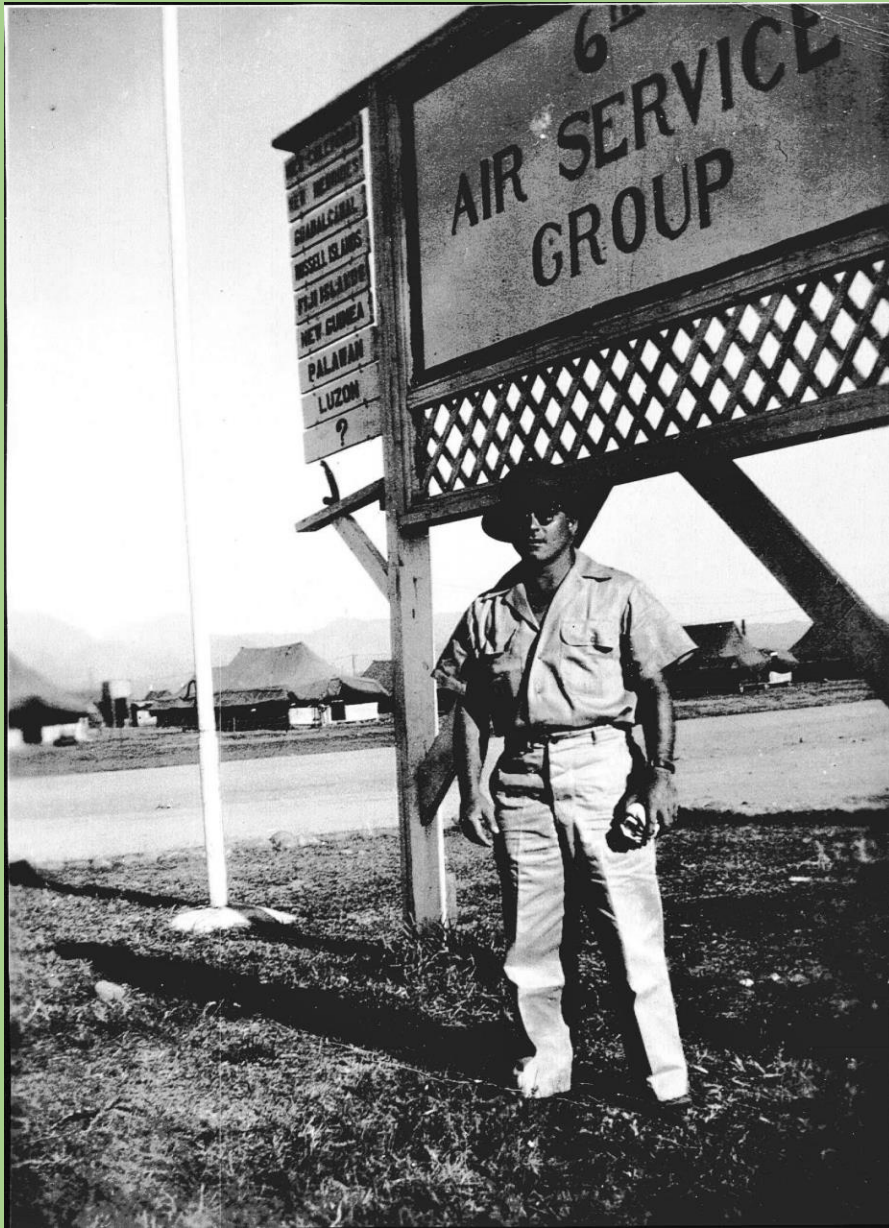


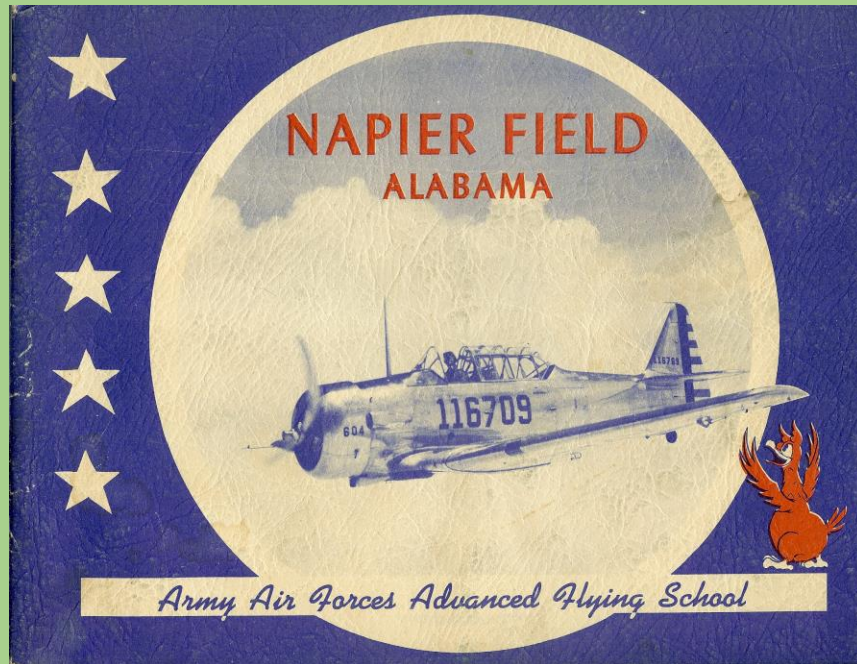
*Keep 'em Flyin' ~ People, Planes & Postcards ~
Dad's WWII Service in the US Army Air Corp –*



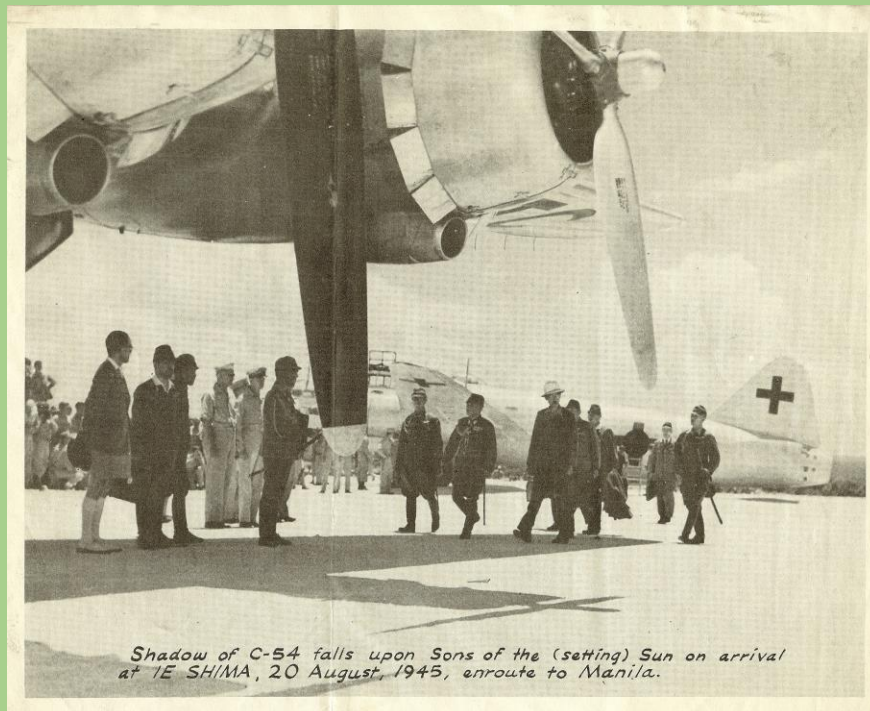
'After Luzon...?' ~ Dad (Michael J. Ricciardi) in field military dress (Staff Sergeant); note 6th Air Services Group (Army Air Core) tour of duty signage behind him (Guadalcanal, others).



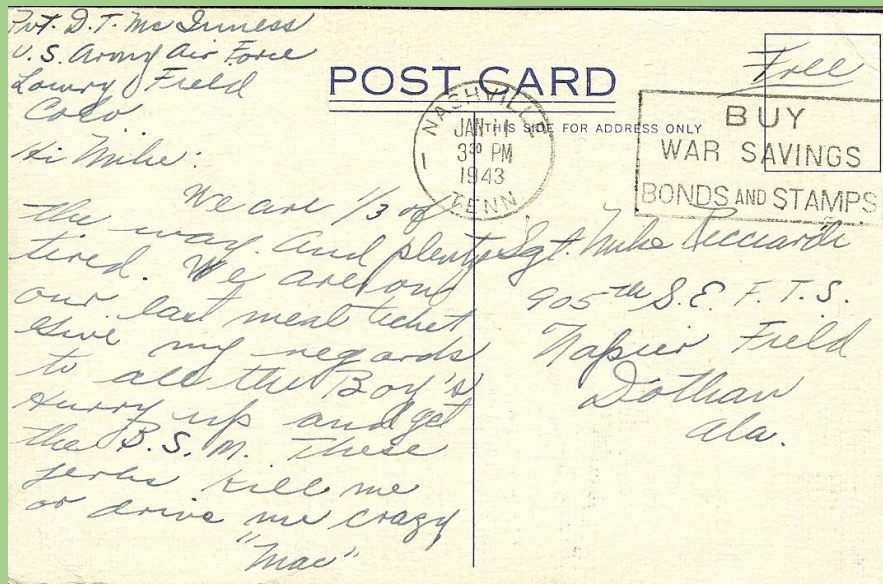
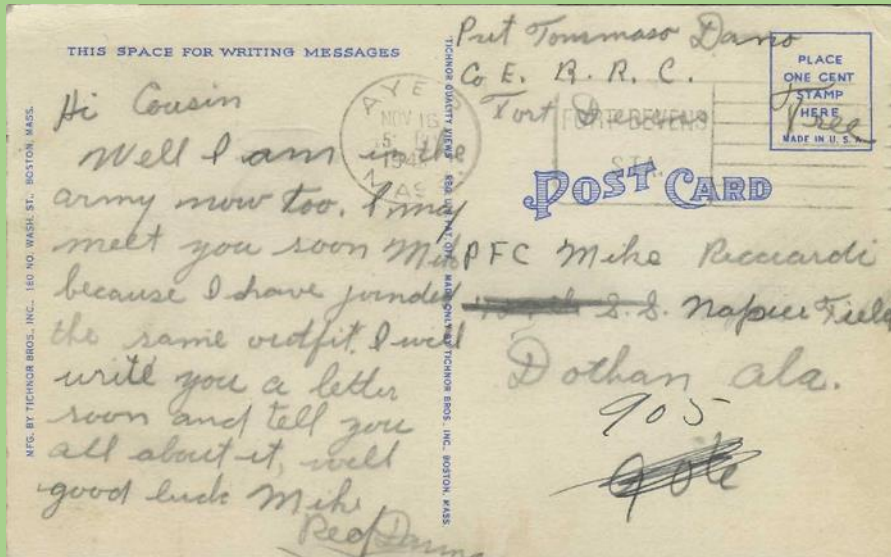
Brochure Cover- Napier Field, Dotham, Alabama – “The purpose of the field is to train cadets in all phases of advanced flying of single-motored planes...night flying, formation flying, blind flying, gunnery practice, navigation, altitude flying. This field marks the final stage of a cadet’s training, and it is here that he is awarded the coveted “wings”. Note “Gruffie” - the Napier Filed mascot, on cover, lower right.



Press Photo found in my dad’s Napier Field Guide (note caption, date)



Post Cards – 1943 - the first is the addressee side of a card sent to our dad from his cousin ('pvt. Tommaso Dana') and is addressed to 'PFC Mike Ricciardi' while he was still in basic training. The *second* post card shown (also addressee side) was sent to our dad by his friend 'Mac' before shipping out (via Colorado, to the Philippines). Note that he addresses the card to 'Sgt. Mike Ricciardi' (our dad was promoted before shipping out). The third image (next page) is of the front side of 2nd post card.

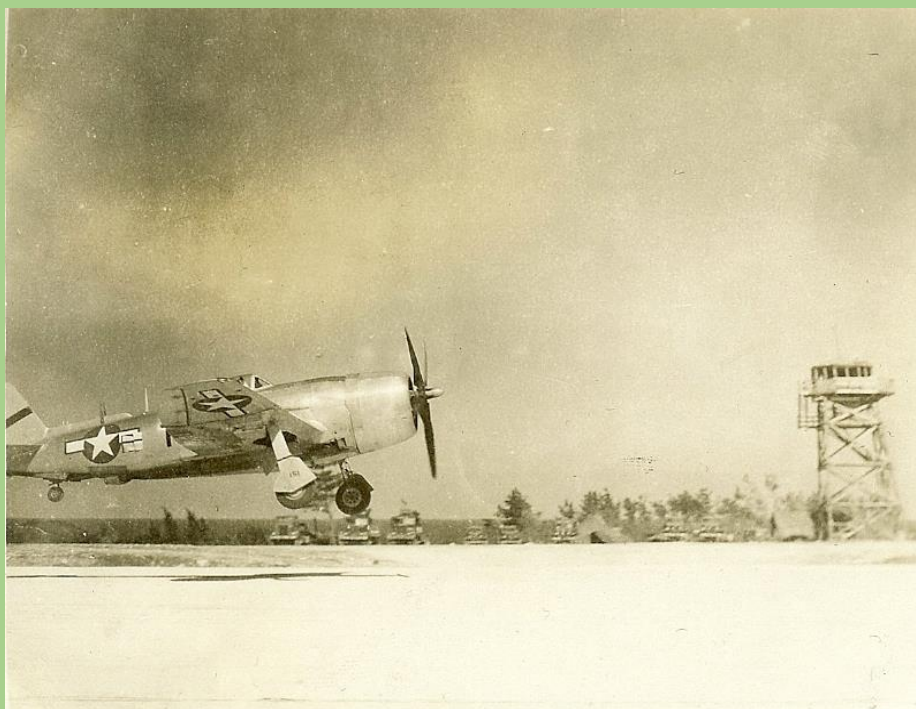




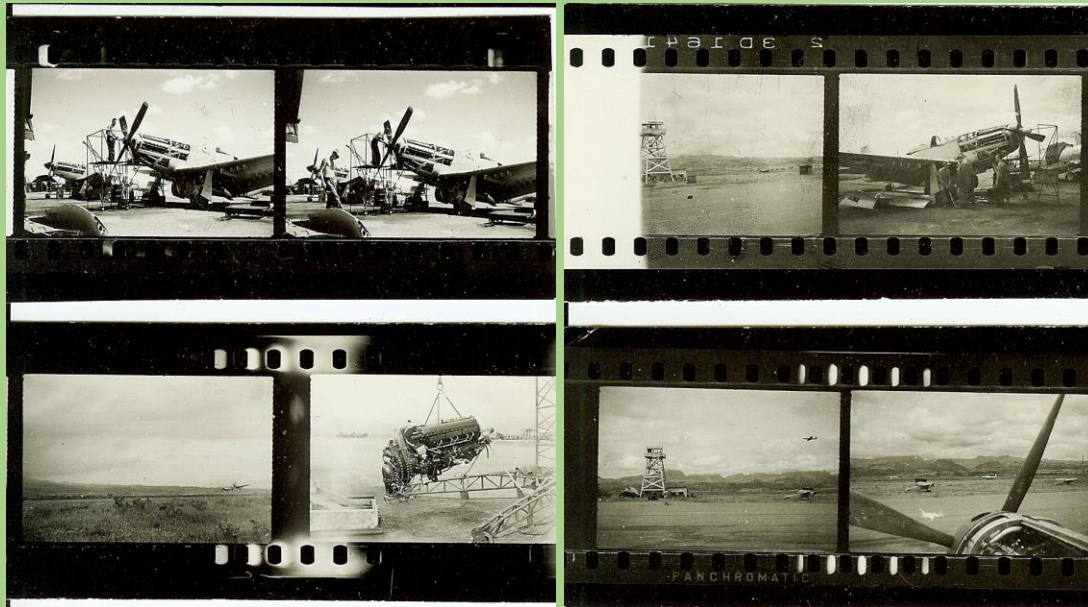
[below] Dad (facing camera, cigarette in mouth) having a pow-wow with his crew, possibly over the missing propeller on the tarp-covered plane behind them (possibly an AT 6 Texan trainer plane) – taken at an unknown Philippine airbase).



[below, top] Runway takeoff (possibly Luzon airfield) of a recently repaired P-47 'Thunderbolt'. Second photo [bottom]: a C-46 cargo plane (note: "Ginger" mascot painted on side of fuselage). Photos by M. J. Ricciardi



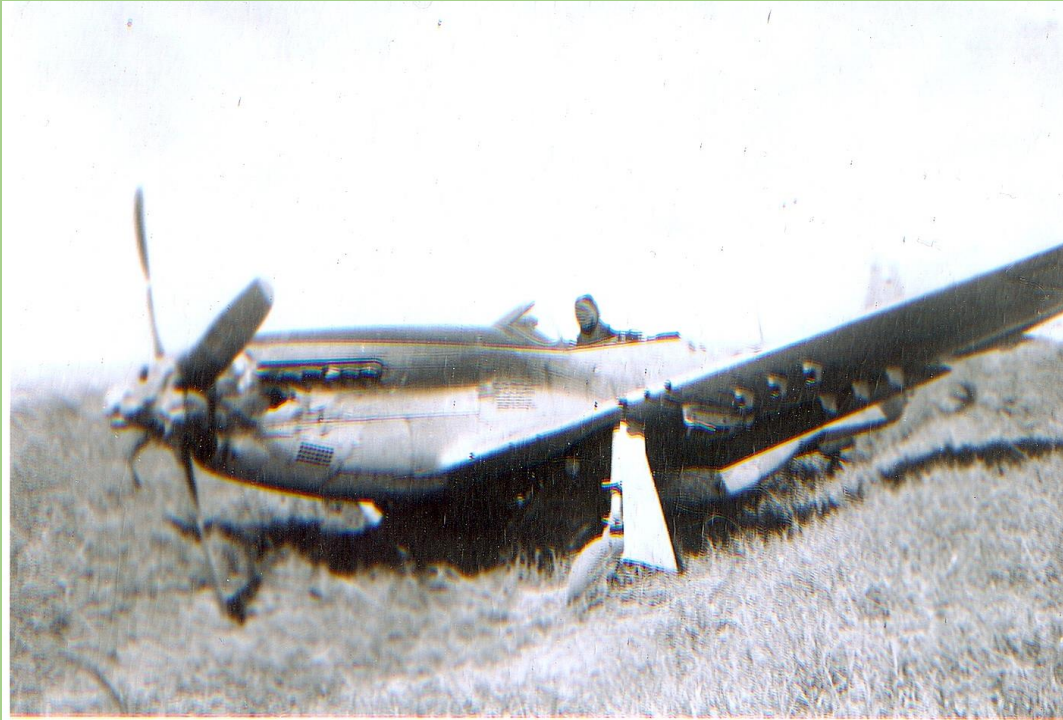
[below] Repairing P-51's; photo series; note: hoisted engine in first photo sheet [left, bottom]; Also note: air tower in distance and view from the wing, second photo sheet [right, bottom]. Photos by M. J. Ricciardi



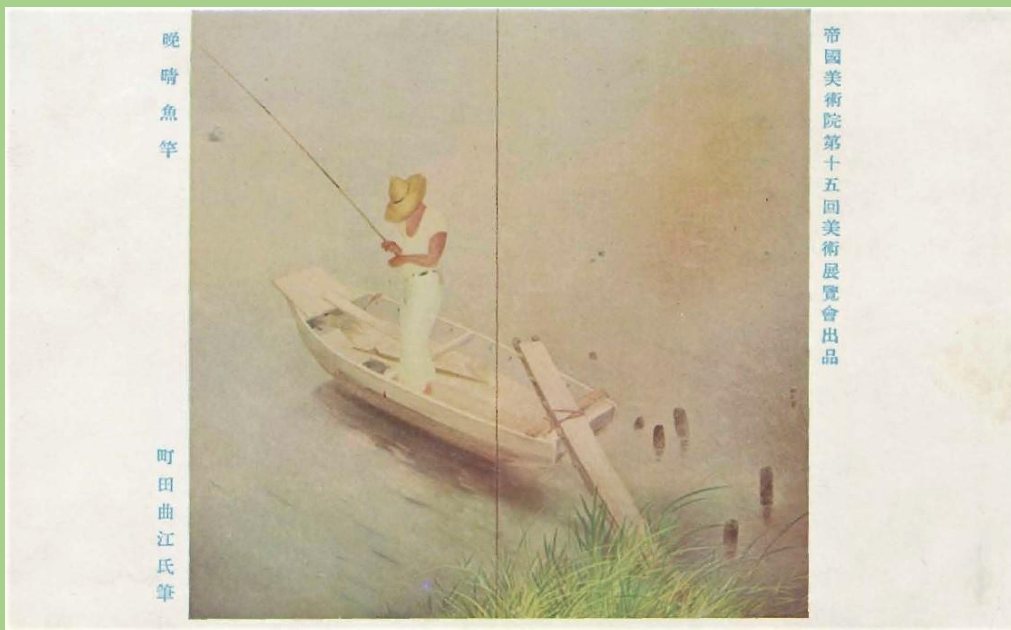
[below] A 'PBY Catalina' (or 'Consolidated Model 28', an amphibious, overhead twin prop plane), photo location: possibly Luzon, Philippines, 1944 or '45. Photo by M. J. Ricciardi



[below] A “downed” P-51 (U.S. fighter plane) with deceased pilot still visible. Photo taken by my dad while on an excursion (unknown location, possibly the Philippines or Fiji, unknown time after crash).



[below] Postcard (unsent/undated) of a bucolic fishing scene with Japanese writing - found in Dad’s postcard collection (note: Dad visited Japan after the war ended, sometime in late 1945).



[below] The men of the 342nd Fighter Squadron (one of several fighter squadrons that our dad was assigned to), location: Philippines, unknown base. Dad, a staff sergeant, is crouching lower left corner.



[below] Our dad (M. J. Ricciardi, back, right) with three other officers from his platoon (unknown base – Philippines?).



[below] Dad posing in uniform - top photo: newly enlisted cadet (Napier Field, AL);
bottom photo: just before being shipped out, with
Staff Sargent rank. (note: *Keesler Field* * stenciled on side of row boat).



*Keesler Air Force Base (IATA: BIX, ICAO: KBIX, FAA LID: BIX) is a United States Air Force base located in Biloxi, a city in Harrison County, **Mississippi**, United States. The base is named in honor of aviator 2d Lt Samuel Reeves Keesler, Jr., a Mississippi native killed in France during the First World War.

Dad's diploma from the Army's Air Corp Technical School (1942)



Photos curated/annotated by Michael A. Ricciardi; photos provided courtesy of Louis M. Ricciardi.

Special thanks to Virgil Robinson for lending his WWII aircraft expertise in identifying the aircraft in many of the photos presented here.

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