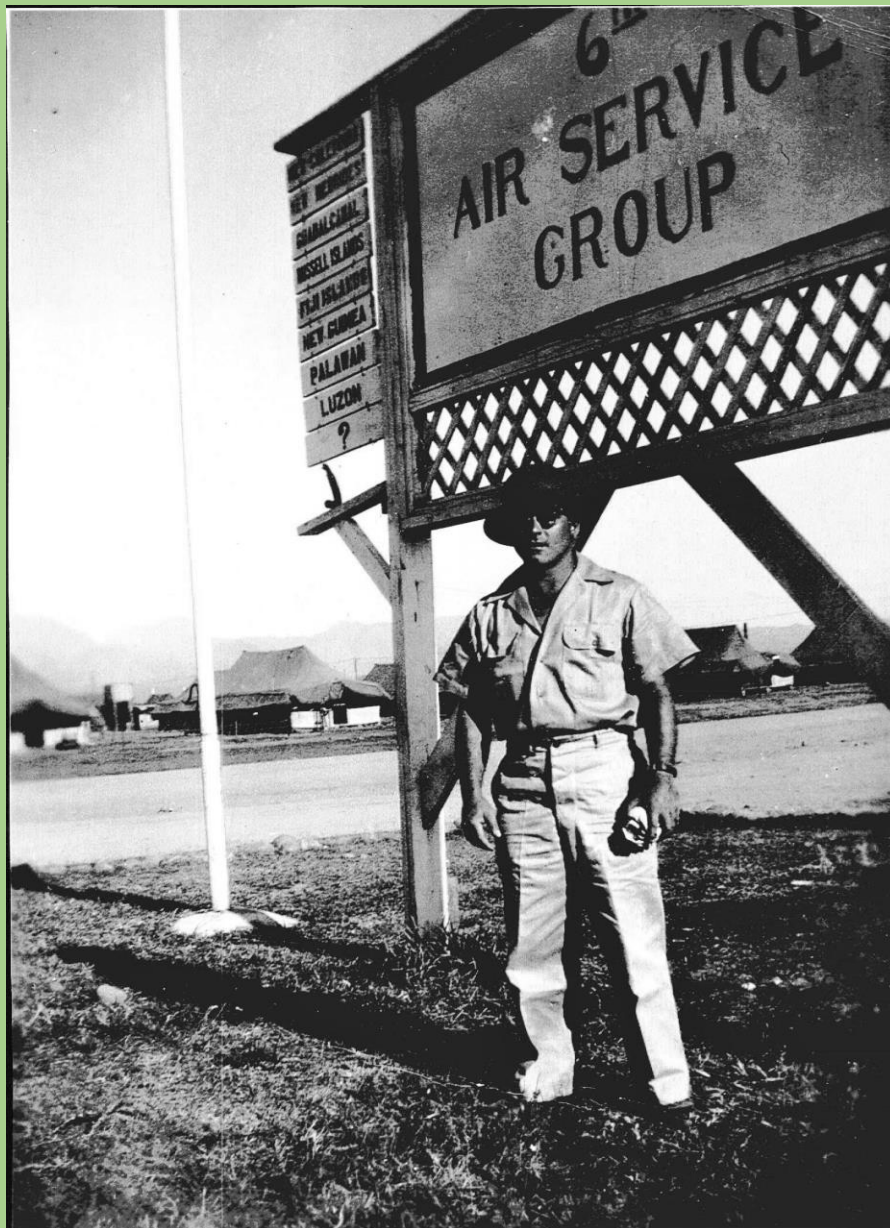


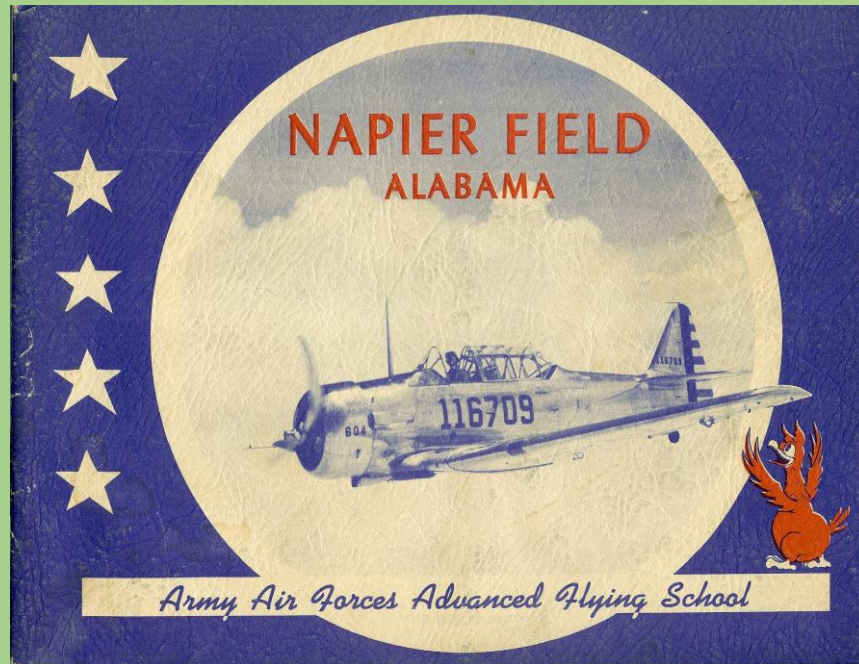
*Keep 'em Flyin' – My Dad's WWII Service in the US Army Air Corp – People, Planes & Postcards*

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**'After Luzon...?' ~ My dad (Michael J. Ricciardi) in field military dress (Staff Sergeant), note 6<sup>th</sup> Air Services Group (Army Air Core) tour of duty signage in background (Guadalcanal, etc.).**



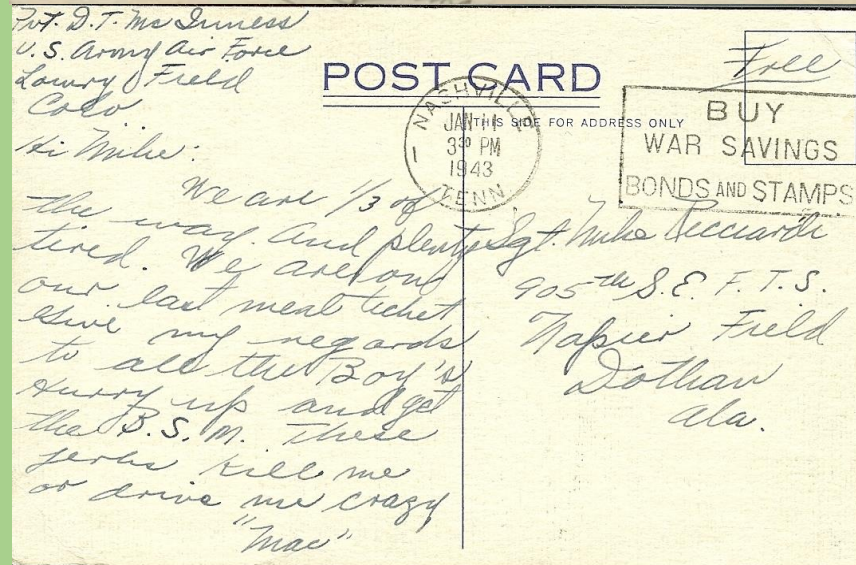
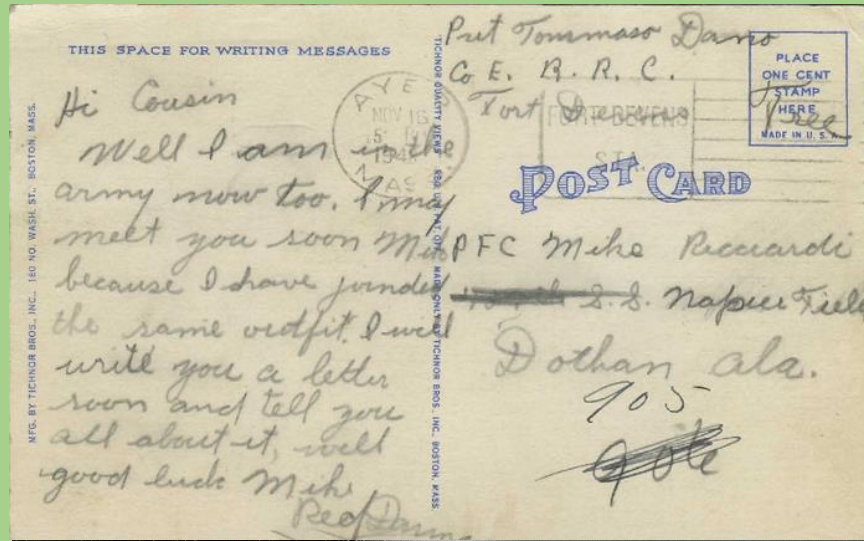
Brochure Cover- Napier Field, Dotham, Alabama – “The purpose of the field is to train cadets in all phases of advanced flying of single-motored planes...night flying, formation flying, blind flying, gunnery practice, navigation, altitude flying. This field marks the final stage of a cadet’s training, 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 C-54 and “press copy”



[below] Post Cards – 1943 - the first is the addressee side of a card sent to my dad from his cousin (addressed to 'PFC Mike Ricciardi') while he was still in basic training. The second post card shown (addressee side) was sent to my dad by his friend 'Mac' before shipping out (via Colorado to the Philippines). Note that he addresses the card to 'Sgt. Mike Ricciardi' (my dad was promoted before shipping out). The third image is of the front side of 2<sup>nd</sup> post card.

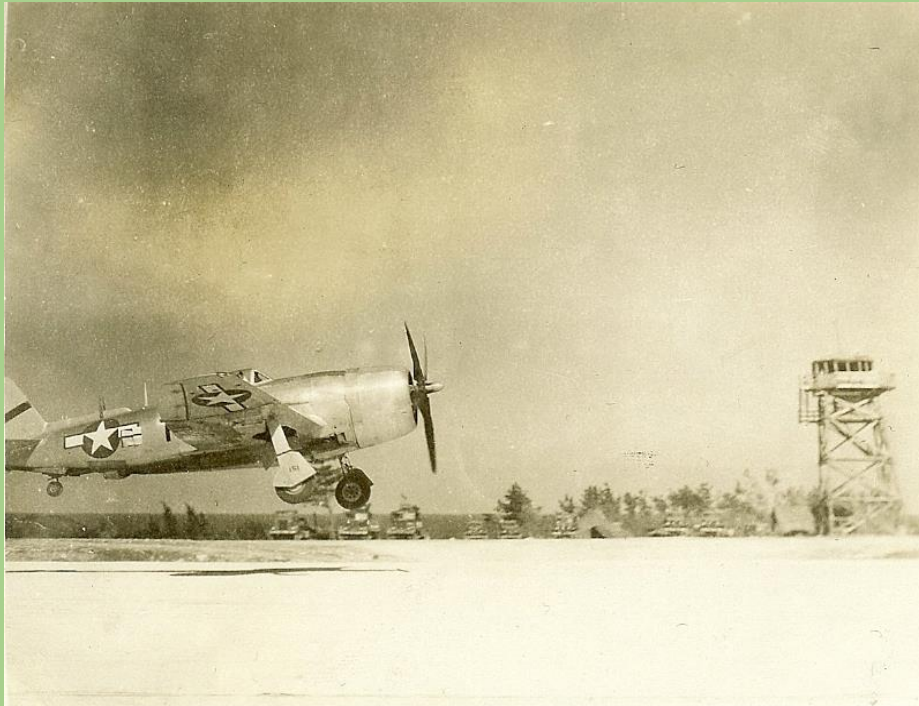




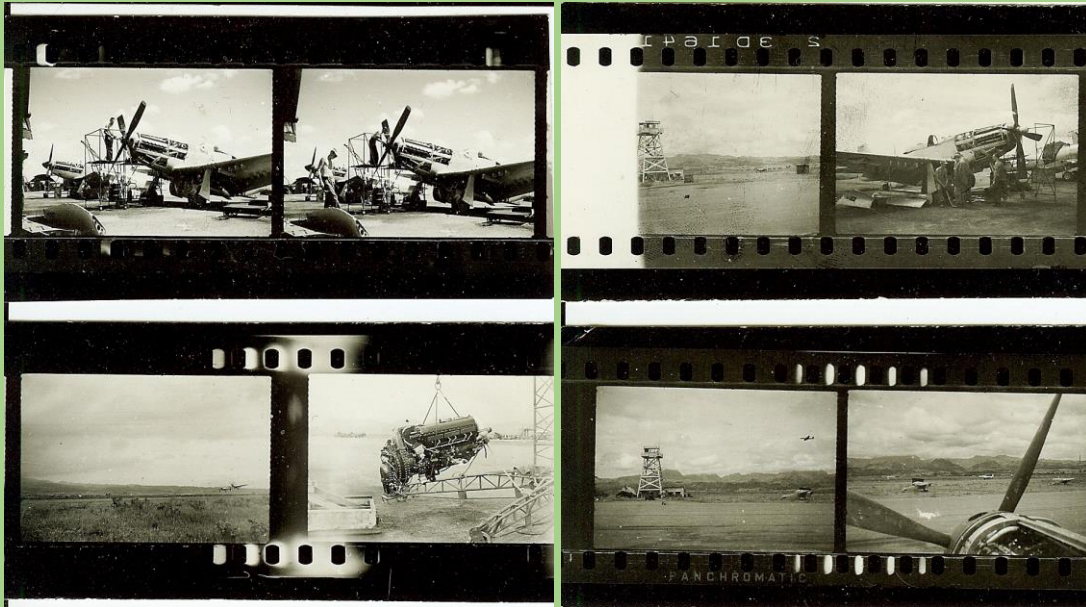
[below] My Dad (facing camera, cigarette in mouth) having a pow-wow with his crew, possibly over the missing propeller on the tarp-covered plane behind them (possibly an AT 6 Texan trainer plane) - unknown Pacific Island airbase.



[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



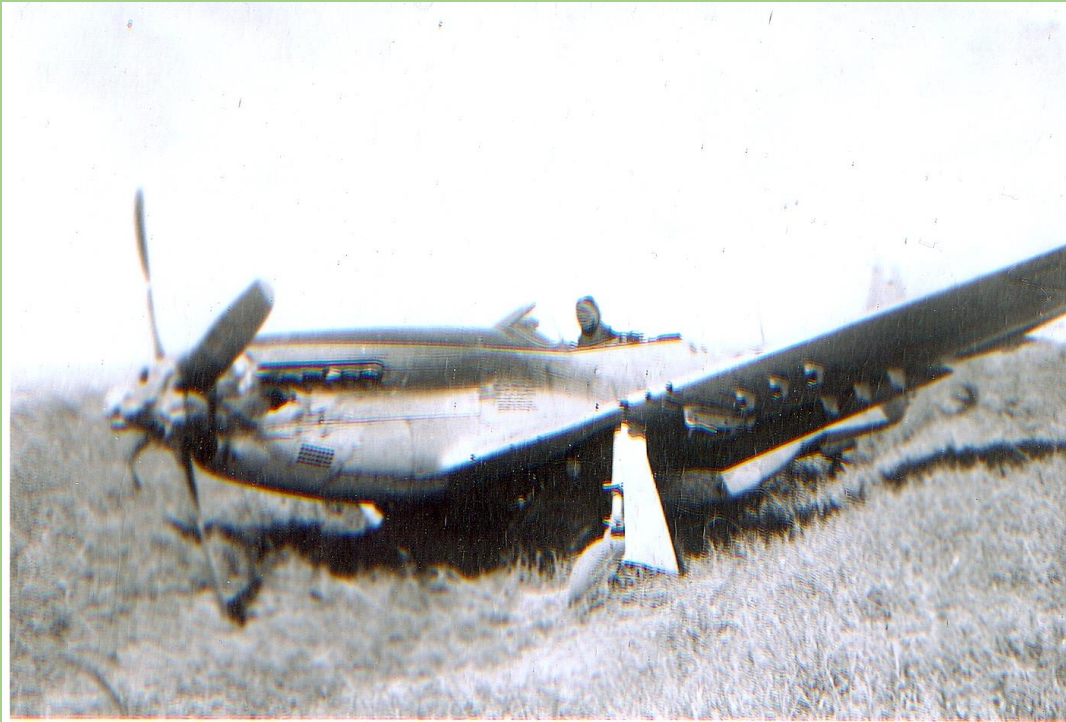
[below] Repairing P-51's; photo series; note: hoisted engine in first photo sheet [left, bottom]; Also note: air tower in distance and view from the wing, second photo sheet [right, bottom]. Photos by M. J. Ricciardi



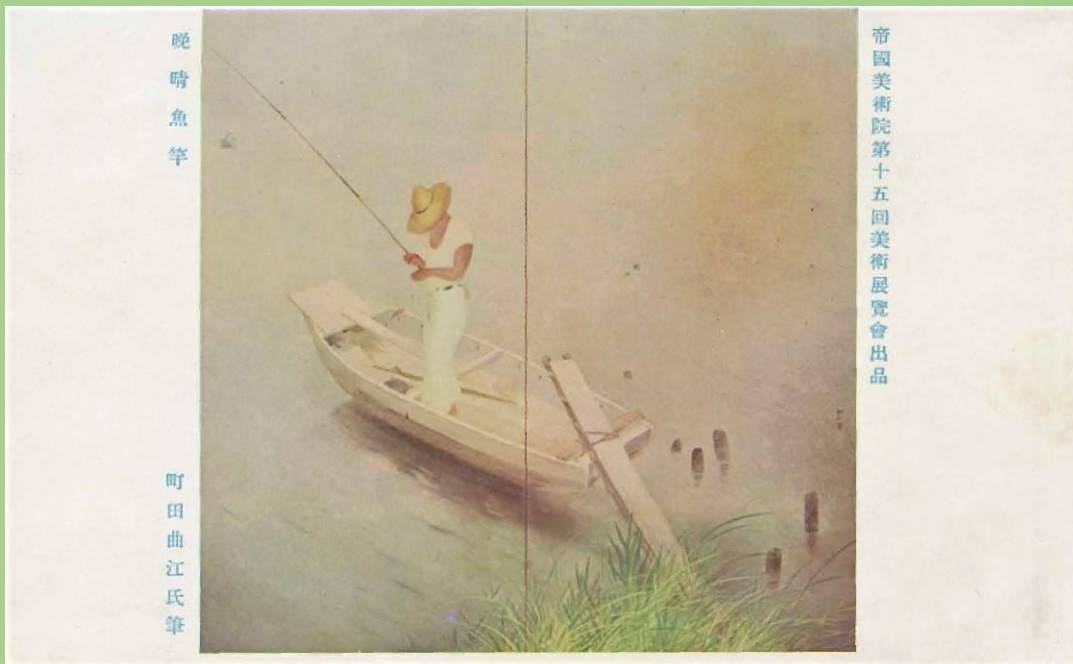
[below] A Pby 'Catalina' (overhead twin prop plane), photo location: possibly Luzon, Philippines, 1944 or '45. Photo by M. J. Ricciardi



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



[below] Postcard of a bucolic fishing scene with Japanese writing - found in my Dad’s postcard collection (note: my Dad visited Japan after the war ended, 1946).



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



**[below] My Dad (M. J. Ricciardi, back, right) with three other officers from his platoon (unknown Philippine [?] base).**





[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.

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**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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