

This is an account from the Flight Log of USMC Dive-Bomber pilot, Lt. H.E. Bradshaw

Attached to **VMSB 243**, known as "**The Flying Goldbricks**", in WWII, participating in "The Battle for Bougainville Island" and "Battle for Rabaul". It is sometimes referenced as "The Hyper War", in the Solomon Islands and Archipelago Areas. During two campaigns in 1943 and 1944, Lt. Bradshaw was awarded The Air Medal and two Gold Stars (in lieu of second and third Air Medals) for his aerial achievements. Dive Bomber – Douglas Dauntless SBD-5—referred to as "Slow But Deadly"

Began training in **Jan 1943** in Pensacola and arrived in Munda, New Georgia Island in Nov 1943.

- Nov 43** Strikes—Kara & Kahili, Bougainville Island & Empress Augusta
- Dec43** Nine Strikes—Bougainville and Ballale Islands, flies to Efate, New Hebrides.
- Mar44** S.C.A.T. missions--from Efate to Espiritu Santos to Guadalcanal to Sterling Is. to Green Island.
- Mar44** Strikes in Kaviang & Keravia Bay (w/ tailgunner "Sullivan")
- Apr44** Strikes Keravia Bay, Talili Bay
- Jun44** Strikes on Rapapo (at this point—Lt. Bradshaw has recorded 24 Combat strikes & 31 Combat missions)
- Jul44** Strikes on Rabaul, New Ireland, and Mane Island (Tailgunner "Sullivan") (32 Combat Strikes, 47 Combat Missions to date)
- Aug44** Strikes on Rabaul, New Britain, Hospital Ridge, Tobera, New Ireland, and Libba Plantation (41 Combat Strikes, 63 Combat Missions)
- Sep44** Strikes on New Ireland & Mane Island targets
- Oct44** Participated in N.A.T.S. missions—travelled to California.

\*\* McDonnell Douglas lost the contract to produce the Dive Bombers to Curtiss Wright. Lt. Bradshaw Returned to the states to train on the new "Helldiver SB2C", known as "The Beast" and "Son of a Bitch 2<sup>nd</sup> Class". It was known to be somewhat unstable in dives and difficult to fly. He trained from Jan45 to May45. He was re-assigned to VMSB 244, "The Bombing Banshees", and returned to Combat in "The Liberation of the Phillipines", in a USMC operation "Magzam". Dive Bomber "Helldiver SB2C-4"

- Jun45** Arrived in Samar—new Tailgunner "McKenna"
- Jul45** Strikes on – Tupi, Waloe, Lamonai, & Tamogan—travelled to Malabang
- Aug45** Strikes on Waloe & division tactics
- Sep45** flew from Malabang to Samar to Mindoro, Luzon, to Okinawa
- Oct45** flew to Tsingtau, China to Okinawa
- Nov45** Patrols Tsingtau to Chinan Railway, Shanghai to Manilla, Manilla to Zamboango to Pelilu to Guam, to Eniwetok.
- Dec45** Travelled to Ewa, and finally, to the states.

Lt. Bradshaw was awarded "The Distinguished Flying Cross" for his combat missions, serving VMSB 243 & VMSB 244 in the Solomon Islands & the Phillipines. He was promoted to the rank of Major, while serving in the Reserves.

Lt. Bradshaw was from Lenoir, NC and a machinist by trade. He passed away in 1979 from complications related to an auto accident. The above information was provided by his proud son, Mark Bradshaw.