

Southern Pines Man Is New Deputy Commander Of Eighth Air Force

Brigadier General William P. Fisher of Southern Pines has been appointed deputy commander of the Strategic Air Command's Eighth Air Force at Westover Air Force Base, Mass. He will assume his new post August 7.

Since 1953, when he returned from Korea, General Fisher has been on duty with SAC headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebr. He served two years as Inspector General for SAC commander in chief, General Curtis E. LeMay, and then was named commander of the 1st Air Division when it was activated at Offutt. He is presently assistant director of SAC operations.

General Fisher attended high school in Southern Pines and in 1934 was graduated from North Carolina State College. He entered the army as a flying cadet and completed flying training at Kelly Field, Texas, in 1935.

He served with the 9th Bomb Group until 1940 when he was transferred to Wheeler Field, Hawaii as commander of the 78th Pursuit Squadron. In May, 1941, he became assistant operations officer of the Hawaiian Air Force; in September he participated in the history-making flight of nine B-17s from Hawaii to the Philippine Islands.

When the Pacific war started in December he was commanding the 28th Bomb. Sq. of the famed 19th Bomb Group at Clark Field in the Philippines and was wounded during the first bombing attack against the field on December 7.

General Fisher moved the squadron in January, 1942, from Bataan to the island of Mindanao in the Southern Philippines where it was converted to infantry and fought for more than two months against the Japanese army before being overwhelmed. In February, 1942, General Fisher was flown to the island of Java and appointed commander of all allied fighters in East Java. When Java fell in March he was evacuated to Australia and then returned to the United States in April.

In October, 1943, he returned overseas to China where he commanded the 308th Bomb Group under Major General Clair Chennault of Flying Tiger fame.

He returned to the U. S. in October, 1944, and was assigned to Headquarters USAF, as deputy to General Lauris Norstad, then chief of staff of the 20th Air Force. He served in various capacities on the air staff until September, 1947, when he entered the Air War College at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Ala.

Following several command assignments General Fisher became commander in October, 1952, of the Far East Air Force Bomber Command which included three wings of B-29s operating from Japan against targets in North Korea. He was reassigned to the states and SAC headquarters on July 17, 1953.

General Fisher's decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross for the 1941 B-17 flight from Hawaii to the Philippines; the Purple Heart, one oak leaf cluster to the DFC, the Legion of Merit and one oak leaf cluster, the Air Medal, and the Distinguished Service Medal.

He is rated a command pilot and command observer and has more than 5,000 flying hours. During World War 2 he flew 53 combat missions.

General Fisher is married to the former Dorothy Douglas of Scranton, Penn. They have two children, Douglas and Ann.

A postwar shortage of rice in the Far East has increased wheat consumption there.

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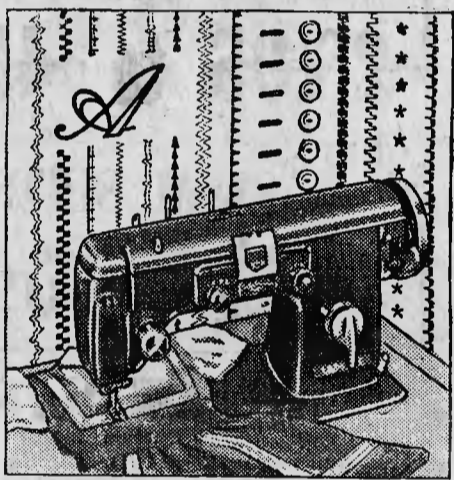
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