

June 13, 2020

This Week in History, 75 Years Ago, The Evening Herald, Shenandoah, PA

WWII Weekly Front Pages

10 June - 16 June 1945

The Evening Herald, Shenandoah, PA

The flags flew proudly on the home front.



PACIFIC

Australian troops stormed ashore in four assault landings in Borneo. General Douglas MacArthur waded ashore with the troops on Labuan Island where two of the landings were made. In effect, the Australians had already won control of strategic Brunei Bay on Borneo's northwest coast. The US Seventh Fleet was involved in the

operation; its commander supervised the amphibious phases of the landing. By the end of the week the Aussies had pushed into Brunei City.

Chinese forces moved nearer to recovery of two former US air bases with a three-pronged advance toward Kweilin and an attack on Japanese forces in the suburbs of Liuchow, 90 miles to the southwest.

American Army and Marine troops hacked their way through the outer defenses of the last Japanese line on Okinawa. One battalion clung to a foothold on the rim of the Yaekudake Escarpment, scene of the enemy's last stand. Tenth Army troops took two towns and four hills in the opening of what looked like the final drive. The battle of annihilation continued against 10,000 diehard enemy remnants who had rejected a surrender demand. At the end of the week it was reported that the Japanese were beginning Banzai charges, and there were indications the battle might end on the weekend.

The Japanese Diet moved to conscript boys of 15 and girls of 17 for combat service in the event of an American invasion of the Japanese homeland. The government introduced a bill to draft all men between the ages of 15 and 60 and all women from 17 to 40 into the "People's Volunteer Corps." The corps would be converted into combat units and put into the front lines "should the Japanese mainland become the scene of decisive battle."

Early in the week Superfortresses scored at least 820 direct hits on the Hitachi engine works at Sukagawa, 115 miles northeast of Tokyo. Other American planes kindled fires at two airfields in the Tokyo area and joined 10 warships 830 miles to the southwest in a bombardment on Minami Daito Island. Late in the week the offensive continued, past its ninth straight day. B-24 Liberators appeared over the Tokyo-Yokohama area, harbingers of heavier air blows yet to come. This was the week which saw the beginning of the second year of service for the B-29, and the beginning of a year in which General Arnold promised that Japanese industry would be wiped out. For the next year an average of 5,000 tons of bombs were planned to be dropped on Japan daily.

The 33,000-ton aircraft carrier Saratoga, the Navy's oldest and sister ship to the Lexington, which had been sunk in the Coral Sea, had taken seven direct hits from Japanese suicide planes off Iwo Jima in February, it was revealed. The ship had been repaired and was back in duty against an enemy which had had good reason on three separate occasions now to think she was through. Two other times the ship had been struck by torpedoes.

EUROPE

General George Patton flew to Washington to report to General Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, for a new assignment. The hard-hitting Third Army commander said he did not know what his new position would be.

Former Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, the last of the Nazi top hierarchy not accounted for, had been captured at a boarding house in Hamburg. He was taken into custody by military authorities and moved to an undisclosed location alive despite having secreted a can of poison on his person.

HOME FRONT

President Truman announced that a definite time and place for a meeting of the "Big Three" had been chosen. It would be held somewhere overseas in July. Also on the diplomatic front, Russia had invited twelve Polish leaders to attend a conference in Moscow June 15th to discuss broadening of the present Warsaw government in line with the Yalta agreement.

The general chairman of the Pottsville annual Flag Day celebration extended invitations to all Gold Star Mothers, all service members home on furlough and veterans of all wars to occupy the program platform at the observance on the 14th outside the Elks Home of North Main Street.

(Photo courtesy newspapers.com, Shenandoah Evening Herald)