

AEROSPACE STUDIES INSTITUTE  
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Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama 36112

USAF HISTORICAL DIVISION  
RESEARCH REPORT

Loss of B-24D, 42-40080

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The following information pertains to the loss of B-24D, 42-40080, 404<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, in the Aleutian Islands in June 1943.

The historical report prepared by the 404<sup>th</sup> Squadron for the period January 1941-January 1944 states that the squadron began operating from Amchitka early in June 1943; that on 11 June 1943 B-24D, 42-40080, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James H. Jones, Jr., pilot, took off at 0552 on a weather reconnaissance mission; and that, because of weather, Jones was unable to return to Amchitka and landed instead at Umnak.

In an interview with the squadron's historian late in May or early in June 1944, Capt. Gordon G. Macnab, Squadron S-2, made the following statement:

We never saw Jones again. Several days later he took off from Umnak, escorting a P-38 to Adak. The peashooter found a hole at Adak and let down, let down, but Jonesy couldn't get in and headed back for Umnak. Weather closed in and around 10 o'clock that night he radioed that he was running out of gas and would make a water landing. He went down off Herbert Island in the Islands of Four Mountains group. Jonesy suffered a fractured skull and other members of the crew got him into one of the rafts and ashore, but he died that night. One other man didn't get ashore and it's presumed that he either was stunned or killed in the landing. The others were picked up . . ."

Eleventh Air Force, Mission Record, 18 June 1943:

One B24 escorting 6 P38s from Umnak to Adak made forced landing near Herbert Island. Pilot killed.

History of XI Bomber Command, 19 March 1943-31 March 1944, page 45:

18 June 1943. B-24D, #42-40080, 404<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron (H), crashed in water off Herbert Island on flight between Fort Glenn and Adak Island.

HQ, XI Bomber Command, Intelligence Summary No. 169, 20 June 1943:

One B-24, #0088, Captain Francine, pilot, 36<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron, took off from this base at 1050 to search for missing B-24 reported crash-landed on Herbert Island . . .

. . . At 1316, Capt. Francine reported that he had sighted six men on the northwest tip of Herbert Island and had dropped supplies.

Radiogram, Ft. Glenn to CG Eleventh Air Force:

211845 TOTAL NUMBER PERSONS ABOARD MISSING AIRCRAFT THIRTEEN STOP TWO UNACCOUNTED FOR STOP ELEVEN SURVIVORS ONE DEAD ONE MISSING STOP . . . PILOT JONES DEAD MISSING PERSON BELIEVED WENT DOWN WITH PLANE STOP CRASH BOAT RETURNING THIS STATION ETA ONE FIVE ZERO ZERO STOP MORE INFORMATION LATER

Radiogram, Ft. Glenn to CG Eleventh Air Force:

220320 CRASH BOAT RETURNED THIS STATION WITH ELEVEN SURVIVORS AND ONE BODY STOP . . . CASUALTIES WERE FLT JAMES HOW JONES JR PILOT DIED MORNING FOLLOWING CRASH OF SKULL FRACTURE AND STAFF SGT WILLARD FOX CRIPPEN WHO WAS LOST IN WRECK STOP . . . OTHER SURVIVORS RECEIVED ONLY MINOR INJURIES STOP AIRPLANE MADE CRASH WATER LANDING OFF WEST COAST OF HERBERT ISLAND STOP PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION SHOWS PLANE COMPLETELY SERVICED ON ARRIVAL AT THIS STATION DEPARTED ON FLIGHT WITH TWO THOUSAND GALS ABOARD PILOT PULLED THIRTY FIVE INCHES AND TWENTY TWO HUNDRED RPM DURING TRIP TO ADAK INDICATING EXCESSIVE GAS CONSUMPTION STOP . . .

Attached is copy of AAF Form No. 205, Flight Surgeon's Report of Aircraft Accident.

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