

## **Shemya History**

**1941 - 1946**

**World War II**

It was dusk; a gray, black cold dusk so characteristic of that part of the world. Standing on the bridge of the lead ship, the captain surveyed the numerous ships scattered within the convoy's pattern. Insuredly he was pleased. The sake he'd taken with his meal had added to the ever present feeling of contempt he had learned to hold for the Americans. Hadn't he and his fellow men chased the much hounded U.S. Army and Navy all over the Pacific? Well, maybe he hadn't, but some of his friends had. Of course, he had been in charge of the landing crafts for the glorious Invasion of Attu. He had done so well that he was now entrusted with the vast convoy of some 12 ships whose mission was the Invasion of the Semichi. There couldn't be any trouble on this mission. The scouts reported no signs of any enemy. Those Americans didn't know potential airstrips when they saw one. Well, we Japanese will show them how to fight a war. Eh? A plane? Where?

Through a sudden break in the overcast sky could be seen one lone bomber clearly marked with the white star of the United States Army Air Corps. Obviously the plane had spotted the convoy for it flew directly over the enemy's powerful invasion force that lay scattered in the waters below. The co-pilot was watching aft as the group of ships disappeared behind the plane's tail. He hollered, "Joe, Joe, Look. They are turning around. "Well, I'll be damned."

Such was the Japanese Invasion of the Semichi Islands. That's how close they came. But for the lone plane, which in all probability couldn't have called enough firepower to drive them away, the Japanese would have occupied Shemya.

## **Aleutians: Gateway to Your Hometown**

Sometime back in 1950 a new concept of war came into being. People were writing, talking and preaching global war. This meant that even such barren, windswept, desolate places, as the Aleutians were a potential battlefield. We know now that the Japanese Air Force chose the Aleutians as their northern Invasion route to the United States. We knew that it wasn't a good idea to let the enemy get any closer than could be helped. The Aleutians were stepping-stones to our front door, and we had to shut that door.

From 7 December 1941 through May 1942, the flood of Japanese aggression flowed pretty well unchecked throughout the whole northern Pacific area. By June 1942, the Japanese were ready to enlarge their hold on the northern Pacific. By June 3rd, 1943, Dutch Harbor had been

described as an awful looking place surrounded by snow-capped mountains. The rocks were covered by mud and slush knee deep. It rained and snowed all the time and the winds galed. It was miserable. It was inconceivable that troops could live the life there. There were no women or liquor. Ham and eggs cost \$1.50. A wristwatch, which could have cost \$20.00 in the States, cost \$70.00. If Dutch Harbor was this bad, what of places are there yet to be inhabited and settled?

The Japanese task force, from which these planes had flown, also brought forces that invaded, took possession of and began to put up defenses of Attu and Kiska. This was the beginning of the war in the Aleutians.

### **Two Perils: Japanese and Weather**

For a period of months, fighting was confined to the air when and if the weather permitted. The Japanese were not only making airstrips, but also putting in defenses against submarines, naval, air and ground attacks. The U.S. worked feverishly to supply the service combat and air units already in Alaska and the Aleutian Chain. Neither side was bothered by enemy action one half as much as it was by the Aleutian weather. After the Dutch Harbor attack, it became standard practice for one of the U.S. bombers to take off from Umnak and acting as a weather plane fly 600 miles to Kiska, radio back the weather conditions and return. This was aerial warfare at its worst efficiency. To operate against the Japanese with any degree of deadliness, we needed land bases closer to their installations at Kiska and Attu than was Umnak. By 10 September 1942, Adak had been available to aircraft with the results that from that time on, the main base of operations against the Japanese at the end of the chain was the Island of Adak. The tempo of warfare was stepped up and though the Japanese occasionally attacked Adak, they were never allowed to take the offensive.

### **Need for Bases**

Still, the battle for bases continued. Aerial observations by our flyers had spotted a convoy—later dispersed by one bomber—headed for the Semichi. By December it became obvious that the Japanese had intentions of occupying Amchitka, 58 miles southwest of Kiska, to obtain a better base than they already had for land based planes. So, in December 1942, the U.S. occupied Amchitka.

That is how the history will show this phase of the Aleutian Campaign. What history will fail to show is the terrifically constant and almost overpowering fight that our men made against

the weather in their efforts to engage the enemy and drive him from his toe-hold in the western hemisphere. We've seen how the flyers were continuously kept from flying by storms, winds, fogs and freakish weather. Even when the plane would takeoff on missions, conditions were far from ideal. Yet when the missions were flown, the planes had to be repaired, serviced and babied in any and all kinds of weather.

The odds were against the ground crews, as were the facilities—no parts, no extra help and time after time no rest or sleep. Somehow the planes were kept in the air when they were needed.

### **An AAP, ASF, AGF and Navy Show**

The headlines of those days told of the bombing of our planes, but usually neglected to mention that without the ground forces to build, support and protect these newly taken airstrips, and without the American Forces to overcome time, impossible obstacles required to service, to keep on flying, our progress in the Aleutians would have been barely rewarded.

While the Army and Air Force fought these elements on the ground, and in the air, the Navy did prodigious work charting the waterways of the chain. This was only a small part of its job, for as the need for more western bases arose, it was the U.S. Navy that moved the ground forces to contact with the enemy. The fight went on in spite of all adverse conditions.

### **We Strike Back Hard**

From December 1942 until April 1943, we prepared various phases of an all out Invasion of Attu, figuring to capture this Island and thereby cut off Kiska Garrison which would become an easy prey at a later date. On May 11th, 1943, Attu was invaded.

### **Shemya Seizure Slated**

During the last days of the battle for Attu, another campaign from Attu was in the making. Brigadier General John N. Copeland selected certain of the hardiest troops from the Fourth Infantry Regiment for a landing on tiny Shemya, some 40 miles to the southwest. There were no Japanese on the Island at the time. A contingent of Alaskan Scouts had reconnoitered the place in May and found only evidence of a Japanese surveying party which had made tests for an airstrip site. The men in the initial landing party had served in the Aleutians long enough to realize that the perils of natural elements can prove as hazardous as those encountered by

engaging the enemy. Japanese or no Japanese, the landing was destined to be a difficult one.

### **Infantry Faces Fog, Reefs and Waves**

Under the cover of a thick fog, landing barges loaded with Americans from the Fourth Infantry Regiment approached the shores of Shemya, after six hours of uncomfortable, sickening voyaging over heavy seas.

A dilapidated trapper's cabin, long before departed and two Russian graves were the only former signs of habitation greeting the forces. High seas producing huge waves, shipped by lashing winds, blew furiously against the jagged shores. The barges tore over partially submerged reefs, ripping open hulls as the frail craft came to rest atop exposed ground. Men waded through the surf burdened with supplies of food and tent material strapped to their backs. The Army had arrived on the island of Shemya. The date was May 25th, 1943. Shelters were soon discovered to be useless if exposed above ground. Finally the tents were used to bundle-in rather than as shelters until excavations could be dug below the surface as protection against the wind.

### **We Whittle an Airfield from the Tundra**

A construction program was immediately begun on a 12 hour per day schedule. From the dark hours of the morning till the hour of seven in the evening, troops labored, grading the tundra, filling holes with rocks and laying steel matting for the essential airstrips. After regular duty hours details were organized involving most of the personnel for the purpose of constructing defense installations. In June 1943, Japan was a powerful enemy which proved a constant threat. American soldiers were asked to exert almost superhuman efforts»

### **First Bomber Lands on Shemya**

The first bomber landed on the flat Island of Shemya from a mission over the Kurile Islands on 11 September 1943. It was an unscheduled landing by a B-24 which had taken off from Attu earlier in the day. The plane and crew had been shot-up pretty badly, with the pilot losing an arm.

Work on the airstrip eased up somewhat for the GI's. Civilian construction companies moved crews in to improve on the hurried job initially done by the military. After that, the soldiers were employed in erecting some substantial living quarters and straightening up

defensive installations. The population of this recently deserted stop was swelled by soldiers and civilians. A community began to mushroom from the desolate tundra covered rock.

### **Civilization Comes to Shemya**

Permanent buildings were erected, but like the early tents, they too were constructed in holes as protection against the blowing winds. Pacific huts, prefabricated and shipped in crates, were set up in a day's time. Only the tops of these oval dwellings could be seen above the ground and the protective mounds of dirt. After a few months, a resemblance of civilization grew out of the northern wilds. Recreation facilities kept pace with tactical construction»

Organizational mess halls and recreational huts were constructed as rapidly as possible until every unit could boast of one of their own in their own area. Roads were improved and electricity and oil stoves were put in the huts. A sewage system was undertaken.

The popular jeep lost its original appearance on Shemya and was turned into a sedan. Because of the weather these little vehicles were provided with improvised enclosed bodies resembling custom made automobiles.

### **Aleutian Solution – Work**

Merely to describe life in the desolate Aleutians during the war as a day to day schedule of tedious labor which seemed as if it would never end, would be inadequate. To say that work was the by-word from sunup to sundown would be an understatement. In the first place, during the winter months, there was light in the sky only a few hours a day, from late November to early April, the sun would rise no earlier than 0930 and would set around 1730. Yet work would begin at 0600 and continue sometimes until 2300 hours.

It wasn't just work either. It was a furious struggle against the elements. Japan was a threat to prepare for, but the elements of the north offered problems to be reasoned with at the moment. Then too, the monotony of the daily routine, the seeming unimportance of the routine drudgery, while fellow soldiers were doing so much in other parts of the world, and many other things, made life on Shemya a poor one at its best.

All did not go as planned in the construction of a strong fortress on Shemya Island. It can't even be said with any degree of accuracy that the mission was accomplished monthly. To stake a claim in defiance of nature means trouble—lots of trouble.

Docks were laboriously built and breakwaters installed off what was considered to be the most protected beach on the island. Shortly after the completion of these shipping facilities, a

furious storm, lasting from the 11th to the 15th of October 1944, the results of constant pounding and raging surf, the docks were reduced to kindling and a great part of the breakwater was washed away. This unfortunate happening proved an almost disastrous loss to an island wholly dependent upon shipping for its provisions. To many men had arrived since the early days of occupation to be supplied by landing craft or parachute, but enough provisions were stored away in warehouses to provide for necessities in case of just such an emergency. To augment these stores, trans-shipment yards were set up on Attu, forty miles away, where supplies bound for Shemya, could be unloaded. Planes and barges shuttle these supplies to the island during the entire winter.

### **Japanese Feel the Sting of the 11th Air Force on Shemya**

In the meantime, bombers of the 11th Air Force were paying regular visits to the Kurile, Paramushiru, Shimushi and air raided auxiliary and naval installations, along with canneries famishing much of Japan's food.

Shemya had heard about Japan's plan to bomb and attack the U.S. with long range balloons and our flyers in the western Aleutians had been instructed on what to do if they spotted one. On 24 January 1945, an unidentified object was spotted at 29,000 feet over Agattu Island. It proved to be a balloon presumably sent from Japan. Tracer bullets from the 343rd Fighter Squadron sunk the balloon into the sea 25 miles from the southwestern tip of Buldir Island.

On April 13th, men of the 343rd on Shemya again had a chance to test their aim with bullets from the P-38's. Out of 12 balloons seen over the western Aleutians, they shot nine of them down.

The most successful raid in the history of Shemya-based 404th Bombardment Squadron was flown on 11 May 1945, a 12 plane flight led by Capt. Robert Wichnan and Lt. Charles Weniger, found a shipping isle visible, for a change, through a clear sky. Several direct hits were scored on a destroyer escort and much damage was done to shipping in the harbor of Katsoda Naval Base.

On June 19th, 1945, Lts. David Long and Paul Clikenbeard of the 404th flew 275 miles over water as far as the island of Urrupu in the Kuriles on a photoreconnaissance mission. They were aloft 15 hours and 30 minutes. This ranked with the longest over water combat mission flown anywhere in the world.

The Japanese knew that the planes attacking them so regularly were Aleutian based, but they couldn't guess what Island was their home base.

## **Super Secrecy Shrouds Shemya**

Shemya was identified merely as APO 729, its secrecy was well kept despite rumors that Tokyo Rose had referred to the island by name on her radio program a number of times. Japanese submarines patrolled the waters in search of information. One was forced to surface and was sunk just off Shemya's coast by a destroyer on 29 June 1944. The craft was rammed twice before it went down. In spite of the vigilance on the part of the enemy, they could still only guess what was going on. Their guess was remarkably inaccurate as is evident by their actions:

1. On a bright moonlit night during the summer of 1943, a flight of Japanese bombers were detected approaching the area of Shemya. It was thought they had gotten wind of the powerful fortifications on the Island but they dropped their bombs in the waters around Attu. Again they guessed wrong.

2. Toward the end of the war in July 1945. Propaganda broadcasts from Tokyo reported that American Mountaineers were being trained on Agattu for an invasion of the Northern Kuriles. The Japanese sensed considerable activity in the western Aleutians. They guessed close, but Agattu, even though it can be seen very plainly, on a clear day, from this island, still isn't Shemya. Their propaganda only proved how little they really did know.

As the Island built up, men had more leisure time to spend weaving yarns about their experiences in civilian life and the hardships of Aleutian service. Sudden flurries of wind and snow, reaching velocities in excess of a hundred miles per hour, were referred to as a "Williwaw", cots were spoken of as "sacks" and what passed as soil in the Aleutian Islands was called "Tundra", Every hut had a pot. In letters written home, Shemya was referred to as our "Island Paradise". Life on Shemya was a stoic existence from beginning to end. There were bright spots though, such as the ground forces had a laugh on the Air Corps when a submarine was spotted by a patrol plane and reported sunk. A dead whale was found in the vicinity a few hours later, highly shot up.

## **The Japanese Empire Surrenders**

Few who were on the Island of Shemya on Sunday 12 August 1945, will forget what happened. Dedication services were being held in the chapel, Japan was on her last leg, Hirohito and his Premier even then conferred on surrendering. It was a sunny pleasant day and men who'd been on Shemya two years were happier, and yet more serious, than usual as the chaplain prayed; the congregation with bowed heads. Staff officers were quietly tapped on the

shoulders and rushed to post headquarters in clipped words, they were told by Brig. Gen Goodman, island commander, that Shemya had been alerted against kamikaze attacks, a last desperate gesture by the beaten Japanese.

Unidentified planes had been picked up by a ship's radar 500 miles southwest of Shemya that morning. Throughout the afternoon and night the army and navy's fighting ships and planes from Adak patrolled the waters of the western Aleutians and toward the Kuriles. The Japanese were however discouraged by the quantity of our patrol planes or for some other reason never showed up.

The next day, 13 August, men of the 404th Bomb Squadron climbed in to their flight suits and took off in their planes to bomb Kashiwabara Staging Area on northern Paramushiru. They knew the end of the war was near and hoped against hope that this mission would be their last and that they would come out of their planes upon their return to Shemya. It was their last mission flown from the Aleutians. The six planes on the flight used airborne radar equipment to paste the Japanese through 10/10 overcast.

One day later, 14 August 1945, the Japanese officially gave in. The sirens that usually dignified post headquarters building blared for 10 minutes, extra beer rations were given to all soldiers. The next two days were declared official holidays. Peace came to Shemya.

### **There've Been Some Changes Made**

That's history. How the war is over and those on Shemya are carrying on different work in helping safeguard the peace. The Island as it stands today is a far cry from the bleak, empty mass of tundra on which the original party landed. Permanent churches, theaters, gymnasium, hangers and administration buildings stand in bold relief against the "Williwaws" as concrete proof of the work performed by the navy and civilians on this island. Landing strips thickly populated with a variety of lanes, innumerable vehicles moving busily about the network of roads laid upon the Islands surface, a constant stream of boats running to and from the Islands piers—all these activities and others are ever present indications of the importance of this base and the part it played in whipping the Japanese.

The Island has reconverted from a base for air action against an enemy, to become, with Attu, the western most outpost in a group designed to protect the United States from invasion through the northeast Pacific area, Alaska and Canada.

## **More Civilization**

Civilization continued to assert itself more strongly on Shemya as the war drew to a close. In September 1945, for the first time in the Islands history men could go to school at night. Williwaw Tech opened with 530 students in 35 subjects ranging from typing to philosophy. On-duty education began in October to occupy the troops awaiting transportation home and drew 643 students. About the same time, a modern movie theater, the "Downtown Theater", equipped in stateside fashion, opened, "Shemya now has three showings per day.

Among the faces going home for retirement to civilian life in December was that of Brig<sup>g</sup> Gen. John B. Goodman, airbase commander.

Winter came to Shemya with a raging fury of wind and snow which hit hardest in January to March 1946. Although installations were by this time well prepared for the rigors of weather in the Aleutians, heavy snow was not expected. It started to snow in January and even the 75 to 100 mile per hour wind didn't blow it all away. For the next two months a minimum of traffic moved on the island. Engineers battled desperately, working around the clock. Men driving in the storms could see only traces of the road.

Winds blowing at 75 miles an hour for a whole week can make life miserable in many ways. Going to sleep to the tune of rattling stovepipes and waking up to the same sounds isn't very soothing. However, many will remember with pleasure some of the meals prepared in the well under a space heater designed to warm the billets. Sacking-in all day was an occupation during that weather.

Picking up speed with its new staff, the Shemya Sentinel boasted the "Largest Mimeographed Paper in the Army". By March it hit eight pages-daily. Organizations felt the pinch of personnel losses due to readjustment more strongly as the winter progressed. Not until the spring did replacements begin to equal losses. On 22 March 1946, Colonel Joseph W. Utter, Post Executive Officer, left for return to civilian life. He was replaced by Lt. Col. Leonard Cox.

## **Shemya Is Put On The Great Circle Route**

Constellations began flying from Tokyo to the U.S. via the Great Circle Route, which passes very near Shemya, Attu became a sub-base of Shemya. The Army Transport Command put Shemya and Adak on its Great Circle Route to the Far East.

In May 1946, the first woman dependent of a Shemyanite arrived in the person of Mrs. Eleanor Burckley, wife of Maj. Claude Burckley. Quarters were set up for the dependents of enlisted men and officers. All who signed to stay overseas became eligible to have dependents

join them. During the ensuing three months the flux continued, even to babies.

With dependents came rules and civilization for the soldiers. In place of undershirts and bare chests in public places, uniform regulation specified proper dress. As the age and military training of arriving replacements decreased, the island training program enlarged. Infantry drill, parading and inspections became Standard Operating Procedure. What wartime soldiers had learned on the parade grounds of the U.S., peacetime soldiers assimilated on taxiways, roads and tundra of a tiny Island which lacked 40 miles of being the western most United States possession.

In June the 3,000th Student registered at Williwaw Tech since it started 10 months before.

### **Strategic Shemya**

From a strictly military point of view, why was Shemya so important? What was its part in winning the war?

1. It provided the major base of operations against the Kuriles, where considerable damage was done by the air force bombers.
2. It offered a landing strip to planes flying lend-lease and other strategic material to our Russian ally,
3. It denied the Japanese:
  - a. Bases for offensive operations against the U.S.
  - b. Easy access to a much needed fishing area.
  - c. Freedom of naval movement in the Northern Pacific Ocean.
  - d. Use of numerous troops that were tied up against a possible thrust by the

United States from the Aleutians.

4. It provided weather stations for the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy, thereby enabling forecasts of favorable and unfavorable bombing weather for planes operating from bases far south of the Aleutians.

5. It provided a testing ground for various types of clothing, equipment and weapons.

Just how much damage was done in the Kuriles by the 11th Air Force operating from bases in the Aleutians and in conjunction with the Navy can be determined from the following figures; reviewing two years of offensive operations, approximately 270 combat missions have been flown resulting in an incalculable amount of damage to ground targets by bombs, rockets and heavy caliber machine-gun fire. Without assistance from friendly fighters, sharp-shooting bomber gunners have taken a toll of 109 Japanese aircraft and 57 of them were definitely shot down.

Eighty seven enemy vessels of all types, by the most conservative estimates, have been sunk or damaged severely in Kuriles waters, Aleutian based bombers and search planes have accounted for a destroyer escort and a transport, at least three sizeable cargo ships, 22 coastal freighters and numerous picket ships and fishing craft. Light naval units sent a medium freighter, a small cargo ship and a sea going tug to the bottom of Okhotsk Sea. Probably sunk another small freighter and have heavily damaged another. In 12 surface bombardments, naval task forces have destroyed or damaged hangers, warehouses, radio stations and ammunition and gasoline dumps at Matsuwa and Paramushiru airstrips.

### **Bomb Tonnage Dropped in 1945**

During the period of 1 January 1945 to August 1945, there was a total of 139 tons of bombs dropped by the 404th Bombardment Squadron. Of this amount 56.3 percent was dropped by planes using the airborne radar system.

The months of May and June shared the credit of being the busiest months of the year with approximately 88 tons being dropped. The primary target for this period was the Katacka Naval Base on the Island of Shimishu.

These results have been achieved, despite incredible hazards and handicaps of weather and distance unequalled in other combat zones, a cost of 16 medium and 7 heavy bombers lost in combat to enemy fighters and antiaircraft fire. No damage had been inflicted and not a single casualty suffered, on any of our naval vessels by enemy action in the Kurile operations.

### **Why Shemya Today???**

Where does the history of Shemya end? What is the Islands future? If all the Information were available, it would be classified "Top Secret" as is much of the data describing what is on Shemya today. In a sense this is still a secret base, but some things are obvious:

1. Shemya is the most important base in the western chain of bases guarding against attack through the Artic Circle, Alaskan and Canadian waters. Experts say any future attack against the United States would begin from the Artic Circle.
2. Shemya is directly on the Great Circle Route—shortest flying distance from the U.S. to the Far East. If the planes of the Air Force are to make such flights, they just have bases on which to land for refueling and in case of bad weather—which conditions exist more often than not in the Aleutians.
3. If the U.S. is to be prepared to defend her shores, the armed forces must be able to

operate in all climates it might encounter. This means flying the Aleutian Pilots at night. The toughest flying weather in the world is encountered hereabouts.

Some say that five bombs would destroy Shemya, that can be said of any island. If anything is worth defending—and we think the U.S. is—is worth defending in depth. Any one base may be knocked out, but the more and stronger the bases a nation possesses; the more impervious she is to attack.

### Summary of Events

1942	Jun 3	Dutch Harbor, Alaska, bombed by Japanese. Japanese landing at Attu, Agattu and Kiska follow.						
	Aug 1	Adak occupied by U.S. Forces.						
	Sep 13	First raid on Kiska made by the 11th Air Force. Intensity of these raids started to increase»						
	Oct 7	Adak taken by U.S. Forces. Construction of airstrip begins.						
1943	Jan 12	Amchitka occupied by U.S. Forces. 11th Air Force now 600 miles closer to the enemy.						
	Mar 23	Kiska being regularly bombed from Adak and Amchitka						
	Mar 26	West of Attu, U.S. Naval Forces exchange long range gunfire with Japanese convoy and forced its withdrawal.						
	Apr 1	Kiska and Attu bombed with increased vigor.						
	Apr 30	Kiska bombed for the 145th time during the Month.						
	May 11	U.S. Forces land at Attu.						
	May 22	Battle of Attu enters its final phase.						
	May 29	Organized resistance of Japanese at Attu ends. Shemya occupied.						
	Jun 3	Shemya occupation complete.						
	Jun 6	Kiska bombarded by U.S. surface units. Action is repeated July 9, 11, 14, 15, 20, 22 and 30th as air attacks continue.						
	Jun 11	Attu casualty figures released: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"><thead><tr><th></th><th style="text-align: center;">Japan</th><th style="text-align: center;">U.S.</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Dead</td><td style="text-align: center;">1900</td><td style="text-align: center;">342</td></tr></tbody></table>		Japan	U.S.	Dead	1900	342
	Japan	U.S.						
Dead	1900	342						

Wounded	0	1135
Missing	0	58
Prisoners	24	0

- Jul 22            Kiska bombarded from the sea and bombed by U.S. and Canadian flyers.
- Aug 13            Light anti-aircraft fire encountered over Kiska.
- Aug 14            First mission from Shemya bombed Kiska.
- Sep 9            Radio Station WXLO's opening night postponed because of fire. WXLO was on the air by the end of the month. Post Exchange opens on Shemya.
- Dec 24            On Christmas eve the USS Scotia went aground in the Shemya Harbor loaded with urgently needed equipment and supplies. Though some of the cargo was salvaged, the vessel broke into pieces in January taking millions of dollars worth of supplies to the bottom of the harbor.
- 1944 Jan 17       Five nurses arrive to join the 329th Station Hospital staff. These were the first women to be stationed at Shemya.
- Mar 15            Record mission flown within 960 miles of Tokyo. Olivia de Havilland visits Shemya to entertain troops.
- May 13            Uptown Theater opens.
- Oct 13            Main docks badly wrecked by severe storms. The supplying of Shemya becomes serious problem.
- 1945 Jan 24       Balloon thought to be Japanese shot down over Agattu by 343rd fighter pilots from Shemya,
- Feb 21            Bank opens for business.
- Mar 3            "The Aleut" Main BX opens.
- Apr 13            Nine balloons thought to be Japanese shot down by 343<sup>rd</sup> pilots.
- May 11            Best bombing mission of the war for the 404th Bomb Sq, Flown from Shemya against shipping at Katsoka Naval Base.
- May 19            Longest mission ever flown in Alaskan Theater went from Shemya to Kruppu in the Kuriles, 2700 miles over water.

- Aug 1            Laundry "Take-In" replaced by new modern method.  
                  Field laundry closed.
- Aug 12          Island alerted for Japanese suicide attack which never came off.
- Aug 14          Peace. Japan surrenders - two day holiday declared.
- Sep 10          Williwaw Tech opens.
- Oct 10          Downtown Theater opens.
- Dec 12          Brig. Gen Goodman goes home. Col. Jamison take over.
- 1946    Jan 14      Winds average 75MPH and gives Shemya worst damage to electrical lines.
- Jan 23       Teletype communications to Shemya blocked by weather.
- Jan to Mar 7   Raging storms-75MPH winds for weeks at a time.  
                  Deep snow stops traffic for days.
- Mar 22       Col. Utter, Executive Officer leaves and LtCol Cox replaces him on Shemya.
- Apr 4       First dependent, Mrs. Buckley, arrives on Shemya.
- Apr 9       First Constellation lands on Shemya, flying the Great Circle Route, from Tokyo to the United States.
- Jun 24       Williwaw Tech registers 3,000th student.

LIFE ON SHEMYA CONTINUES ——HISTORY HAS LONG DEPARTED