

## VP-40

### Iwakuni, Japan. May 1951 to Jan 1952

We were based at Iwakuni, Japan along with a Sunderland squadron from Australia.

In the fall of 1951 VP-40 was advised of a hurricane warning that was expected to arrive over our area. All of our aircraft evacuated to Manila except for CA-8 & CA-9. I believe the Sunderland's flew north and left one at anchor in the harbor because it had two bad engines and no beaching gear to bring it up onto the ramp area.

I was "Officer of the Day" for the time that our squadron was to be away from Iwakuni.

This left two airplanes to be prepared for the coming storm. The first item was to make spoilers for the top of the wings out of 2 x 6 planks of wood and held down with sandbags. All the hull fuel tanks were filled to capacity for added weight. Next we took a fire hose and fill the rest of the hull with fresh water until it ran out the after hatch opening. Two tractors and two 6 x 6 trucks were cabled to the wing tie downs. The storm started just after dark.

The pictures show all the debris that was picked up from the harbor floor and blown up onto the ramp. The PBM's were straining at the tie downs and we were not sure if the tires could take all the flexing. One of the people said he saw one tire leave the ground.

The Sunderland that was at anchor in the harbor broke loose and was blown up onto the seawall.

The hurricane passed directly over us and we were in the eye of the storm for about 20 to 30 minutes which gave us a little time to check on the PBM's and all the debris which had accumulated on the ramp. The aircraft looked like they were holding their own.

After the eye passed over us it was several hours before the wind died down.

The next morning we found the anemometer which blew off the hanger roof and the needle was stuck at 122 knots.

Ens. Fred Sindlinger