

## Personal Account

### Major Robert Goldsworthy

#### After his Stay at the Tokyo Hilton

#### See Also on Web:

1. [Robert F. Goldsworthy - US-Japan Dialogue on POWs](http://www.us-japandialogueonpows.org/Goldsworthy.htm)  
[www.us-japandialogueonpows.org/Goldsworthy.htm](http://www.us-japandialogueonpows.org/Goldsworthy.htm)  
Born: Rosalia, WA (1917) - US Army Air Force, B-29 Pilot 881st Squadron, 500th Bomb group - Shot down over Tokyo on Dec 3, 1944
2. [Robert F. Goldsworthy An Oral History](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/oralhistory/goldsworthy.pdf)  
[apps.leg.wa.gov/oralhistory/goldsworthy.pdf](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/oralhistory/goldsworthy.pdf)  
An Oral History. Interviewed by Sharon Boswell. Washington State Oral History Program. Office of the Secretary of State. Ralph Munro ...
3. [Robert F. Goldsworthy's Return to Japan](http://b-29.org/73BW/goldsworthy/goldsworthy1.html)  
[b-29.org/73BW/goldsworthy/goldsworthy1.html](http://b-29.org/73BW/goldsworthy/goldsworthy1.html)  
Pages on the B-29 Superfortress Then and Now . . . a website dedicated to the amazing B-29 and the men and women who flew and built ...
4. [Amazon.com: Robert F. Goldsworthy: Books, Biography, Blog ...](http://www.amazon.com/Robert-F.-Goldsworthy/e/B001K81I5W)  
[www.amazon.com/Robert-F.-Goldsworthy/e/B001K81I5W](http://www.amazon.com/Robert-F.-Goldsworthy/e/B001K81I5W)  
Page and shop for all **Robert F. Goldsworthy** books and other **Robert F. Goldsworthy** related products (DVD, CDs, ...)
5. [Images for Robert F Goldsworthy](#)
6. [56 Years Ago Today - XMission](http://user.xmission.com/~tmathews/b29/56years/56years-4412.html)  
[user.xmission.com/~tmathews/b29/56years/56years-4412.html](http://user.xmission.com/~tmathews/b29/56years/56years-4412.html)  
Commander: Maj. **Robert F. Goldsworthy** POW Pilot: 2/Lt. Robert E. Sollock replaced by Col. Richard T. King POW Navigator: 1/Lt. Benjamin F. Edwards KIA
7. [Our Campaigns - Candidate - Robert F. Goldsworthy](http://www.ourcampaigns.com/CandidateDetail.html?CandidateID=69364)  
[www.ourcampaigns.com/CandidateDetail.html?CandidateID=69364](http://www.ourcampaigns.com/CandidateDetail.html?CandidateID=69364)  
Name, **Robert F. Goldsworthy**. Address, Spokane, Washington , United States. Born, September 26, 1917 Still Living (95 ...)

December 3, 1944, I led the 500<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group on a mission to target 357, the Mitsubishi aircraft engine factory on the outskirts of Tokyo. With me, besides my crew, was Col. Richard T. King, the 500<sup>th</sup> Group Commander and Col. Byron T. Brugge, 73<sup>rd</sup> Wing A-3.

After dropping our bombs we were hit by fighters and in the fight, were set on fire, we had to bail at an altitude of about 10,000 feet. As far as I could find out afterwards, nine got out of the aircraft and were picked up by the Japanese. Out of the nine only three survived. Col. King, myself and Sgt. Harold Schroeder, right scanner.

I was picked up quickly, given a good beating by the civilians and taken by the army to the Kempei Tai headquarters in downtown Tokyo.

Our cells were about six feet by eight. We were required to sit cross legged in the middle of the cell, at attention, eyes straight ahead. The cells were unheated and the winter was very cold. Our cells were always below freezing. We were not allowed to put our shoes and socks. When the weather got too severe we were allowed to wrap up in our blankets during the day. We were allowed four blankets. The blankets were small by our standards and it was difficult to keep all parts wrapped sufficiently to keep warm. I was held in solitary confinement in that prison and in one more in the Tokyo area.

While in the cells we were fed a small amount of rice each day and sometimes, a small piece of fish. In the four months of solitary confinement I dropped from 175 pounds to about 90 pounds. We were very hungry all the time and our minds dwelled on food day and night.

I was interrogated quite often the first three months. I was questioned about the B-29. I had quite a few beatings by sticking with name, rank and serial number until I saw by accident, our own tech orders on the B-29. They knew the airplane pretty well. Where they got the tech orders I never knew.

We got to be great liars in our interrogations but being caught in a lie would result in a beating. The guards would beat on us quite often and had many ways to make life completely miserable. Twice I was taken to an airfield where they had a captured B-17. I was supposed to show them how to fly it. I gave them everything backwards. Low RPM, fuel mixtures in Auto-lean, booster pumps off, cowl flaps closed --- everything backwards to the proper procedure. They had some good airplanes of their own so I can't imagine them buying my instructions. But they wrote everything down, drew diagrams, and we all went away happy.

April 3, 1945, I, with Col. King and Sgt. Schroeder was taken to Omors prison camp which was located on a fill in Tokyo Bay and halfway between Tokyo and Yokahama. Treatment

was a little better and we got a little more food. There were 36 of us in the barracks. We were mainly B-29 people but we had a Navy Pilot, a Marine, Pilot and a B-24 Pilot, who was shot down on his last mission over China.

As we were B-29 personnel who had bombed the homeland, were held as special prisoners. We were held under guard day and night and were never allowed out in the main camp to mingle with the other prisoners. Our food ration was only half of the ration of the regular prisoners.

Later in the spring we were taken out to work. We cleared the ground of bombed out buildings and planted gardens. The work was hard and some of the guards very difficult, being special prisoners we knew we had not been reported as POWs. Our families were never told anything other than we were MIA. One Japanese Officer told me that they had heard through the Red Cross that my wife had been killed in an auto accident. I didn't believe it but it was worrisome bit of news. False as it turned out.

Air-raids were increasing and we could see the daily results of the bombings and the fire raids. The countryside was being completely devastated. Our knowledge of the outside world was practically zero. The regular prisoners would try to talk through the wall that separated us and give us a little information. We knew when President Roosevelt died and about the invasion of Okinawa. We also heard a lot of rumors. We hung on to every piece of news, rumor or not.

We did not know of the atomic bomb but after it was dropped we noticed some our guards were more vicious while others kinder. The day the war ended we were lined up to be taken out to work. We were stopped by the Headquarters building by the camp gate. Inside we could see the Japanese girls, who worked there, crying. Some of the regular prisoners came by and give us the thumbs-up sign that it was all over.

We were still not allowed to get out into the camp even through the war was over. It was another week before we were released out from special confinement. But we knew it was over and that we had survived.

The B-29s started to drop food to us. We all were suffering from beri-beri, dysentery, jaundice and malnutrition with its related diseases. The food dropped by the B-29 saved our lives.

Two week after the war was over were evacuated and taken to a hospital ship. I was flown to an army hospital on Guam. Then to the Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco. Finally to Baxter Hospital in Spokane, which was near my home.

After several months in the hospital and on convalescent leave it was back to active duty and the whole experience was a bad dream.

But we all came out of it with a greater appreciation of our freedoms and of what our country really means. I treasure good friends made in camp but a POW will never forget what it means to lose one's freedom.

We all experience highs and lows although the lows were more frequent than the highs. My lowest moment came when I was in my fourth of solitary confinement. I was informed that I had been tried and convicted and would be executed. Twice I was taken out to a firing squad and twice I was returned to my cell. That was the last I heard of the trial but it was a scary thing.

Being cold and hungry all the time and locked in a small cell, sleeping on the bare floor is a low. Being told your wife was killed is a low.

But there was one great high. We had to put time on the honey bucket brigade. It was hard, heavy work. My good friend, Maj. Halloran and I were hauling partners. One day a mean guard was walking beside the completely full ten gallon bucket. It was always necessary to walk out of step to keep the bucket from bouncing up and down on a flimsy bamboo pole. This guard had been beating our legs with a club so Hap and I started walking in step. Sure enough the bucket started to bounce and, sure enough, the pole broke and, sure enough, the whole load went all over the guard. The Japanese civilians around laughed. It made our day.

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