

## My Last Mission

By Carl B. Peterson III, 767 Sq.

I was the tail gunner on Edward K. Delana's crew that went down in the Adriatic Sea about 25 miles off of the Yugoslavian Coast on January 31, 1945. We had to abort from the 767 squadron formation after circling over two cloud covered targets, Moosbierbaum and Wiener-Newstadt. The bombs were salvoed at sea dropping through the bomb bay doors as the hydraulic selector valve was not working (Editors Note: Ditching a B-24 at sea with the bomb bay doors flapping in the breeze is especially hazardous as the rush of water into the center of the ship decreases the float time rapidly.)

I went out the left waist window and down, down, in the ice cold water. When I came up again and regained consciousness, I swam to the left side life raft which was floating free nearby. I was barely able to climb aboard. Seconds later the left wing sunk and the whole ship, ( what was left of it) rolled over on its left side with the right wing standing straight up. There were four crew members already in the right side life raft. Then the plane rolled over more with the right wing and broken and bent props crashing on top of that raft. Somehow I managed with the "Grace of God" to pull three of them into my raft.

I was injured in the crash and after a few weeks at the 61st Station Hospital in Foggia I returned to the squadron area and went on rest leave with the 4 other survivors of my crew.

At the time I was not aware of the severity of my injuries receiving compression fractures of the cervical spine and lumbar area. In November of 1984 I was operated on at the VA Hospital in Iowa City. I piece of pelvic bone was grafted into my neck and a disk was removed along with three arthritic spurs. I am still weak, but hope to make the San Antonio reunion. I am a disabled veteran.

Killed in the crash:

Edward K Delana, Pilot  
Frank F. Hower, Co-pilot  
William Ungenthum, Navigator  
Richard Gomez, Engineer  
William M. (Ziggy) Gross, N/gunner  
Ray Steelman, Recon Cameraman\*

Surviving the crash;

Moe Halverson, Bombardier  
Robert C.( Casey) Neal, Radio operator  
Wallace D.(Ole) Olson, Top gunner  
William F Nourse, Ball gunner  
Carl B. Peterson, Tail gunner

\* This was his 35th and last mission

Bud Markel  
461St & 484Th BG Assn

Dear Mr Markel;

In reviewing my file, I came across some documents that might be of interest for publication in the Torretta Flyer. I had been doing some research on my father's old units and had obtained from the Albert F Simpson Historical Research Center, information on the airfield at Torretta, Italy.

I visited the field in May, 1984 with the help of Professor Umberto Albanese of Cerignola. I found the trip extremely sentimental, as my father, William M Warren ASN A270880, had been killed on a mission over Elba forty years prior to my visit. I have plans to make the San Antonio reunion in 1986

Yours very truly,

William (Bill) Miles Warren, son of  
William M. Warren, 827 Sq.

Dear Bud

I would like to correct something in the last "Flyer". You have George Barulic listed in the 764 Sq as a new member. He was actually in the 766 Sq and a member of our crew.

In the article "The Rise and Fall of a Liberator" there are some errors. William H Darden 766th Sq CO was flying pilot and Culos Marion Settle from crew #35 was the co-pilot. Later Culos (RIP) said that the ship lost power and Captain Darden announced that he was going to ditch in the reservoir and that anyone who wanted to bail out could. Culos Settle decided to go. George Barulic seeing Settle bailing out did so also. The crew was then rebuilt to replace those lost in the lake. I replaced Schlosser as navigator. Looking forward to seeing you all in San Antonio.

Joel Fish 766Sq

## Mail Call



Dear Bud

Last fall Adolph Marcus, nose gunner on our crew and I journeyed to Neponsit NY to visit John B. O'Neill, who lives in a rest home there. He was our tail gunner. I enjoyed seeing him again very much as it had been October 1957 when I last saw him. With the exception of his crew mates and a brother he does not have many visitors, so our evening with him at dinner was especially enjoyable for him. We hope to bring John with us to the reunion in San Antonio.

Cordially,  
George Bouras MD, Navigator, 824 Sq.



From left, George Bouras, Adolph Marcus, and John B. O'Neill, crew of Ramp Roster.