

## Mail Call

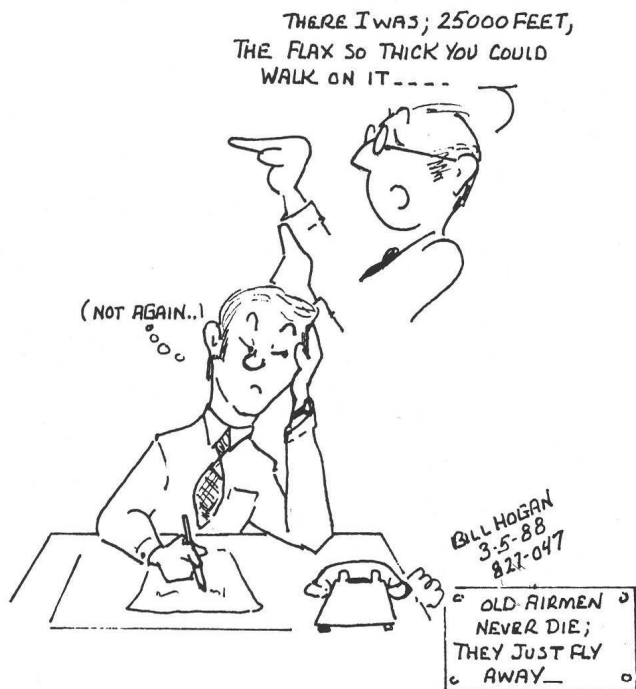
Newton, Mississippi

Dear Bud:

The Torretta Flyer No 14, Summer 1987, was the best yet. Of particular interest to me was the picture of the crew of Lt Robert E Arbuthnot. I was a member of that crew. All of the members survived the war. We became a lead crew later, so sometimes our navigator, bombardier, and co-pilot flew with other crews. The navigator 1st/Lt Leland J Harp, and Bombardier 1st/Lt William E Patterson were shot down and became POW's.

On page 15 the Official Report of Mission No 67, 22 July 1944 Rumania Oil Refinery Ploesti, Rumania the co-pilot Jack L Gunn bailed out near the base and sustained a broken leg. If my memory is correct he was flying with 1st/Lt Taylor who was noted in the report as bailing his crew out. Our crew was not flying the day of the Ploesti mission. I remember the bomb dump fire, it was quite some display of fireworks. The smoke over the runway was bad, with a strong cross wind, making landing conditions almost impossible.

Sincerely  
Hugh G Baker, 765 Sq



Dear Bud

I read with great interest the letter from Harold D "Bud" Pressel Jr 825 Squadron which appeared in your Fall/Winter 1988 Torretta Flyer No #16. The airplane on which he was a tail gunner was "OL-45" which I remember well.

Bud mentioned that on February 7, 1945, on a mission to Moosbierbaum the plane was hit or developed mechanical problems. I would venture to say that "OL-45" developed mechanical problems rather than being hit. How the ground crew ever kept this plane in the air must go down as one the great miracles of all times. "OL-45" was one of the last camouflaged airplanes in our group, because as you know most of the B-24s were unpainted the later part of 1944 and until the end of the war in May of 1945. \*

When our crew arrived in Italy we were warned to hope we would not be assigned to "OL-45." Our first mission was on August 24, 1944 and you guessed it, we were assigned to "OL-45."

I well remember starting at the beginning of the runway over sheet mat, then over a long stretch of dust or mud and over sheet mat at the end of the runway and we were still on the ground. Our pilot Lt Kooker, managed to finally lift the poor worn out B-24 off of the ground but not until all of

us had aged ten years. I always wondered what happened to "OL-45" and after reading Bud Pressel's letter I can see that this poor soul finally collapsed early in February 1945. "OL-45" was indeed a credit to the B-24 hall of fame, and I am sure she flew on many worthy missions before finally giving out. It is a shame this Liberator could not make it until the end of the war in Europe.

One last point. In another letter in the same Torretta Flyer,

Ed Lawler mentions Charlie Marshall. I flew one mission with Charlie Marshall who was a fine individual and an excellent pilot. I do vaguely remember his being missing for a short time and I believe later his being made Operations Officer.

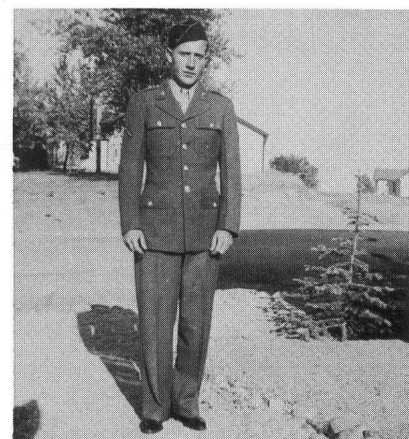
You indicated that you possibly had his address which was in Salinas, California. If you have his full address will you kindly send it to me, as I would like to write him and inform some of the crew of his whereabouts.

Many thanks  
Roy R Lee Jr-Bombardier  
Kooker's crew 825 Squadron

\* Editors note: There were several painted aircraft still flying in some of the squadrons at the end of the war.

The Salinas address for Charles Marshall is the last known. We have no further information on him.

## The Last Mission



Donald E Reid 825 sq  
Deceased 10/19/88

Donald E Reid was inducted into the service April 26, 1943 and served a little over two and a half years in the AAF. He wore the service badges for the Rhineland, Air Combat Balkans, Northern France, Rome-Arno, North Apennines, Po Valley, and Southern France.

He was married to Francis Reid and had five children, and nine grandchildren. He worked as a machinist and shop foreman and was active in the VFW Hawthorne post #2075.