

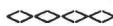


an old photo of Lt Wester (above) in front of #35 and I believe the crewman bending over was Lt Abe Abadi-Bombardier. I do not remember the hexagon design on top of the rudder, but I don't think it was a borrowed plane. I vaguely remember that some of our ships were loaned to another squadron before we started flying missions, also one our pilots ferrying a ship flew so low he almost hit a stone wall.

Ship #35 had about 35 to 40 missions on it when we were forced to land on a Spitfire strip on Corsica while returning from Southern France. We heard it crashed on the way back to our airfield. At Rome we had been picked to continue flying missions in another plane while several engines were being replaced on #35.

I enjoy the Torretta Flyer very much, please keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Ed Stevenson 765 squadron



Redondo Beach, CA
Dear Ed:

In regards to your remarks on ship No 35 James Hardee of the 764 squadron reminded me in a recent letter that the 461st BG was assigned originally to the 55th Bomb Wing, hence the six sided design with the number 2 below probably signified one of the groups making up the 55th wing. When the group was reassigned to the 49th Wing, the logo was not changed immediately to conform to the 49th Wing standard. This leads me to believe that you are correct in stating that the ship in question was not borrowed.

Bud Markel, editor

Atwater, California

Dear Bud:

In reference to Torretta Flyer No #14, page 32, the Fred Hill collection unknown GIs.(top left) I would think Fred would have known them, they worked in the intelligence section of operations. The unknown S/Sgt (right 2nd from the bottom) is Sgt Brown of the armament section and later flew as a gunner. He played on the baseball team and he and his friend Sgt Biaggie from the armament section always greeted each other with "San Jose," I assume that one or both came from San Jose, California.

Torretta Flyer No#17 back page. I'm sure ship #35 belonged to the 765th squadron while they were assigned to the 55th Wing. This is confirmed by the soft cover book " The Heritage of the 15th Air Force 1943-1980," page 38.

I was assigned to the 764th Squadron Ship #13 "Chippie Doll" and can remember painting the signs on her.

James L Hardee, 764 Squadron



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Dear Bud:

This is the fate of the crew of 2nd Lt Joshua R Hooper, Milford, NJ, of which my younger brother Jim, was the tail gunner.

They arrived in Italy December 1944 and were assigned to the 461st Bomb Group, 766 Bomb Squadron.

On February 21, 1945 on a mission to Vienna, South Station Area, was missed by the pathfinder method. The formation overshot the IP Michelback and ran into the Mossbierbaum flak area. The second section did not believe the first section had corrected far enough to the right on the bomb run and left the formation.

The first section turned out to be correct but wrong on rate. The second section over corrected and bombed the Wiener Neudorf Aircraft engine factory near Modling, Austria. Seven of the planes in the first section were hit hard by flak and three of them failed to return to base. All three of these planes headed for safe territory east of the Russian bomb line.

The following is the letter we received from the Department of the Army April 18, 1950:

This office desires to furnish you the information concerning the final determination which has been made in the case of your brother, the late Sergeant James DeLanzo.

In order that you may be fully advised as to the basis for our determination the following is a resume of the pertinent facts of your brother's case as revealed by Department of the Army records.

Your brother was one of ten crew members aboard a B-24G type of aircraft, serial number 42-58408, which departed from Torretta, Italy on February 21, 1945 on a combat mission to Vienna, Austria. According to statements made by personnel from other planes on this same mission, your brother's ship began losing altitude while over the target area. The plane had one engine feathered and was falling away from the formation when it was observed that another engine was on fire. When last seen, the aircraft was still under control but heading in the direction of the Russian lines. All members of the crew were subsequently reported missing in action.