

February 11, 1987

306th Echoes  
2041 Hillsdale  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Dear Sir:

I just received the January issue of the 306th Echoes and found it very interesting. Thank you for sending it.

The article under the heading "Book Traces Planes to 1st Wing, Division" regarding the short service record to 42-29806, etc. this was their first mission and I was on that mission. There were ten in the crew and only five survived the crash in the North Sea returning from the raid on Wilhelmshaven. It was my first mission with this crew so I didn't know anyone except one gunner and that Floyd Fields was the pilot.

After a briefing for this mission, two gunners took sick. Sgt. Repkowski from Pennsylvania and I, then from New York, were told to go in replacement of these two gunners. This was Repkowski's 17th mission and my 7th. He was not one of the survivors.

As far as I know the only members of the crew who survived were the Co-pilot, Bombardier, Ball-turret gunner, Top-turret gunner and me a waist-gunner. After the crash I saw only the Navigator and the Radio Operator floating in the water, did not see the others.

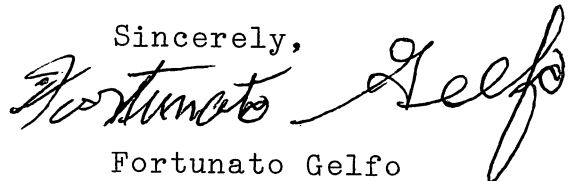
The five of us were picked up by a German Sea Rescue Plane and taken to a place where the German soldiers were sent to recuperate, in the Friesland Island. After about two weeks we were all separated I was taken to a hospital near Mulshaven and never saw the other four again.

In the Echoes I am listed with the 423 when I was really with the 368.

Not that this is much information but it would be interesting to know about the other four survivors of this mission.

Again, thank you for sending the 306th Echoes to me.

Sincerely,



Fortunato Gelfo

Fortunato Gelfo  
4090 N.W. 42nd Avenue  
Lauderdale Lakes, Fl. 33319