

I was assigned as an Aviation Radioman and for Patrol Squadron VP-45.

The aircraft we used was a PBY-5--a Catalina flying boat--a very sturdy, reliable aircraft. Our crew consisted of a first pilot, a co-pilot, a navigator who most times was also a pilot. I was first Radioman and I had a second radioman that could not send or receive Morse Code. This was not too good but those in command thought that, at least, he could repair the radar if anything happened to it. We had a first mechanic named Zilakowski from Ohio and I hope I pronounced that right. We also had one ordnance man in the crew to repair the ordnance, if needed, and act as another gunner.

The aircraft had twin 30 caliber machine guns in the nose turret, a 50 caliber machine gun in each aft blister on each side and a single 30 caliber gun which opened up and fired underneath. These planes had no wheels, so when we landed on the water, two crew members had to wade out, attach wheels to each side, and then a tractor pulled the plane onto the beach.