

Let us Never Forget

Florian Stamm was born on January 17, 1924. He grew up in a large family with eight siblings. He and his family lived in Northern Wisconsin in Adams County while he was growing up. He worked on several farms while he was in school. He enlisted in the Navy during World War II. He went through training at Naval Station Great Lakes. He was then assigned to the USS Indianapolis and enjoyed his two years and two months on the ship.

The Indianapolis was then given a secret mission and secret cargo. The Captain of the Indianapolis and the crew were not privy to the information about the cargo onboard. After delivering the cargo (the Atomic Bomb), to the Island of Tinian the USS Indianapolis was torpedoed by the Japanese. The ship sank and of the nearly 1,200 crewmembers 900 ended up in the water while the others perished onboard the ship. The 900 that ended up in the Ocean were left floating, swimming, or submerged in frigid shark infested waters. For four days the men floated hoping that someone would rescue them from this horror. They were spotted by chance by a Lieutenant trying to repair an aircraft. Of the 900 men that went into the ocean when the ship sank there were only 317 that survived the long grueling four days and five nights in the water.

Afterward Florian was stationed in San Francisco. He hitchhiked home to Wisconsin and started his life after the Navy. He married Ione and they had six children, including three of the sons who went on to serve in the military. In 1974 Florian married Mary and added two daughters to his family.

In interviews, when asked about his experience, Florian said it never got easier to talk about or remember those days after the Indianapolis sank. He never held it against the Navy or the United State Government. In fact was called to Washington DC to testify in defense of the Captain of the ship at his Court Martial.

The Stamms, along with families from all over the United States attended Reunions in Indianapolis. Many of the crewmembers gave money to build the Memorial where they gather in downtown Indianapolis.

Florian died July 25th 2015, he was buried on the 70th anniversary of the sinking of the ship. At the site of the Indianapolis Memorial a flag was flown in his honor the day he died.

If you are interested in learning more about the USS Indianapolis, its crew, its mission or its fateful end there are several books out there on the topic and Mary has arranged to have a speaker come to the MH Public Library on the 10th of November at 1PM to present on The USS Indianapolis.

With this series we want to honor Service Members that served our great Nation. As I mentioned in the last article we need your help to honor these fine Americans that

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served to ensure we continued to have the freedoms we enjoy today. If you have someone you would like us to include in this series, please help us research and develop write ups. Our email is mhamlegionpost113@gmail.com



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