

Italian Operational Group,

Mission:

Peedee

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The Operational Group cooperating with the British SOE was to assist the partisans in preventing passage of German troops retreating north through the Liguria region of Northern Italy.

Summary:

By the winter of 1944 the Germans had lost control of Southern and Central Italy. The front line ran from Pisa on the West to Ravenna on the East. In Northern Italy the Liguria region, which included the important port of Genoa and was the site of the 7000 partisans of their Sixth Zone which contained 14 cities and towns. This was the site of operations to which PEE DEE and ROANOKE were assigned. The OG role was to provide military instruction and combat training to the partisans. The SOE responsibility was to provide intelligence information to the advancing allied forces. SOE leaders were Col. McMullen and Maj. Davidson.

On January 17, 1945 Capt. Vanoncini and five men parachuted into the region and were followed on March 21 by two more and on April 2 the remaining nine were dropped. During January and February weather was cold, snow deep and living conditions poor.

There were constant enemy attacks and late in February the partisans made a drive that liberated Ottone on the east. Weapons and other training continued, increasing after the April drop. Much time was spent with supplies that were dropped from plane loads at 18 locations. For each drop groups of 3 or 4 OGs were sent out with around ten partisans. Drops included arms, ammunition, clothing, food, propaganda, paper for printing, gasoline, explosives, motorcycles and medical supplies.

The partisan officers and military leaders were professional, kind and friendly to the Americans. Commander Miro was experienced, superior in military leadership, and claimed no political affiliation. From mid-April through the end of May security was good, making penetration by Germans difficult. Good medical care for all was provided by a professional staff of doctors, dentists and nurses.

On or soon after April 12, 1945 news of the surrender arrived and the partisans started a drive south to liberate Genoa. This was done in two weeks as the allied forces advanced north toward the city. As the Germans and fascists fled north partisans and allied soldiers from many countries were liberated from various prisons and were greeted with clothing, shoes, and medical care.

Personnel & dates parachuted:

Capt. Les Vanoncini - Jan. 17, 1945
T/Sgt..Caprioli - Jan. 17
Sgt. George Codino - Jan. 17
Sgt. Mario Tarrantino - Jan. 17
Cpl. Sam Perusso - Jan. 17
Cpl. Anthony Panaro - March 21
Cpl. Mathew Assarone - March 21
Lt. Vincent Bartolomeo - April 2
S/Sgt. Eddie Sattile - April 2
S/gt. Philip Francis - April 2
S/Sgt. Carmen Turco - April 2
T/5 Dan Chiavaroli - April 2
T/5 Mike Penetar - April 2
T/5 Pat Quagliato - April 2
T/5 Louis Guidarelli -April 2
T/5 William D.Gagliati - April 2

(dal sito web www.ossog.org)