



# **Reaching Beyond the Waves: The Inspirational Story of One Teacher's Sixth Grade Students' Search for the WWII Survivors of a Downed B-17**

*Suzanne Zobrist Kelly*

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In October 1942, a B-17 carrying a crew and passengers, including famed WWI Ace and Medal of Honor recipient Eddie Rickenbacker, was forced to ditch in the Pacific Ocean. While floating aimlessly for three weeks on life rafts, the men battled sharks, blistering sun, and the lack of fresh food and water before being rescued. All but one survived.

More than forty years later, sixth grade teacher Suzanne Kelly read to her students a book written by the plane's co-pilot. They were enthralled and asked the question, "What happened to the men?"

REACHING BEYOND THE WAVES tells the story of how Suzanne and her sixth graders searched for?and found?the survivors, the men who rescued them, and others involved with this historic event. From declassified military reports and correspondence with the Army Air Corps, Marine, and Navy men involved, she shares how she and her students located people and information, and the multitude of discoveries they made through their investigations. It is an inspirational tale of facts and friendships, of reaching out and building relationships around the world.

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