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B-24 Liberator Units Of The Fifteenth Air Force (Osprey Combat Aircraft 21)



Synopsis

The B-24 was heavily utilised in the North African and Mediterranean theatres by the USAAF's Fifteenth Air Force, with operations over the Ploesti oilfields in Rumania being some of the most famous missions undertaken by the big American 'heavy' in World War II (1939-1945). The stirring work of the Fifteenth Air Force is often overshadowed by the glamorous 'Mighty Eighth', yet the men flying the B-24 fought ceaselessly right through to VE Day. This is the third of five titles planned to chart the operational history of the Consolidated heavy bomber, and is the first single volume to exclusively cover the Fifteenth Air Force's B-24 units.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a WW2 vetereranan who served in the Fifteenth Air Force as a member of the ground crew, this book has been a long time coming. As a history book or a book of memories for those who were there, it is a welcome addition to everyone's collection. It's accuracy in every detail, be it text or illustrations, is beyond reproach. It would have been nice to dedicate the book to those comrades of ours who didn't come home. Maybe now, it will be known that the air war in Europe was fought just as valantly from Italy as it was from England.

Cool little book. It has a fair amount of information, lots of pictures and stories to really make this an enjoyable read. It is not an all encompassing reference; however, it is fast and fun. I was pleased that the mission to Bad Vaslau, Austria on 23 April 1944 was included. Previously, I thought that the

only objective of that mission was to bomb a German air base. The book included the information that there was also a fighter aircraft manufacturing facility there. This was a mission that few crews wanted; the German fighters always defended their base with passion. It was like throwing a rock at a hornets nest. This mission is important to me because my uncle; Staff Sergeant Arthur Leo Crow, was killed during the mission. He was the nose gunner on a B-24 bomber named Towney's Tavern (after the Captain, John C. Townsend). My uncle and three other members of the crew were killed and the other six guys spent the remainder of the war as POW. I enjoyed the book and recommend it. SDSerf

I bought this book for my husband because he flew B-24's during WWII. He loved it and reread it several times. It brought back many memories. He passed away January 17th, 2015 at the age of 90. He was always alert and told many tales of his missions.

The B-24 Liberator was the workhorse heavy bomber of the 15th Air Force. The 5th Bomb Wing flew the B-17, but all other wings flew the Liberator. This compact Osprey Series book details the organizational development of the 15th AF, and presents an excellent discussion of bombing missions and targets. Flight characteristics of the Liberator as well as combat flying are presented in the form of first person narratives which are skillfully interwoven into the text. The result is an interesting read from both a historical and human interest perspective. B-24 devotees, 15th Air Force history buffs, and modelers seeking accurate color plates will all find this book rewarding. In the interest of full disclosure, this reviewer is favorably prejudiced toward Robert Dorr's book because a fatal crash described in detail on pp 55-58 involved my father. Photographs of the 3 crewmembers killed in this crash Norman Kraus, Norman Apperson, and James Hindes are available on the WWII Memorial Registry website.

Most of us, even those interested in the Air War in Europe have little appreciation for the history of the 15th Air Force. This book does an excellent job of laying the groundwork for it's activation and make-up. The logistics difficulties, less-than-efficient manning and aircraft acquisition and terrible operating conditions, make a story of it's own. New, untried and controversial tactics, heavy loss of aircraft & crews, high profile missions and the incredible stories of crew heroism make this a riveting read. Ploesti is detailed in the many aspects of the mission - the many missions. This is another excellent book by Robert Dorr - well researched - which presents a great deal of information to the reader.

Interesting pictures of some WW2 bombers. Tales of the men who flew them and their heroism and courage. Especially proud since it includes a section on my father. A slim, small book but a wonderful resource about men who are almost all gone now.

As some readers of my reviews will know, I come to books largely through ship and aircraft wrecks which I happen to be studying at the time. In this instance, I am searching for details of the B-24 bomber which sank off Malta during WW2. Whereas the Mediterranean theatre of operations is mentioned, Malta is not (although that is not a criticism at all!). What I did discover was a book which gave an excellent précis of the subject of B-24 operations throughout Europe although, for me at least, I would have liked more details of those aircraft which were lost. Instead, we mostly get a brief description of whatever raid and how many aircraft were lost. Nevertheless, this is a very good book and shows off the author's knowledge of the subject. It also puts the 15th Air force into perspective with explanations of how units came into being, changes of names and commanding officers and how they moved on through Europe until they were eventually won. Well illustrated with historic B&W photos throughout, the work also includes 30 colour plates showing side profiles of Liberators in their different liveries. Altogether, I would suggest this is an excellent starting point for those with an interest in the subject. NM

The author said this was not a book about B-24s as much as it is about flying B-24s, and he is dead on. If you want a book full of statistics this is not it. However, if you want the feeling of flying as part of a combat crew, you'll enjoy it. The only (minor) error I noticed was the color plate of B-24J-120-CO 44-41355 of the 461st Bomb Group, 764th Bomb Squadron. The correct number was B-24J-210-CO and the cowls on a 764th aircraft would have been painted dark green, (Okay, I like statistics too)

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