

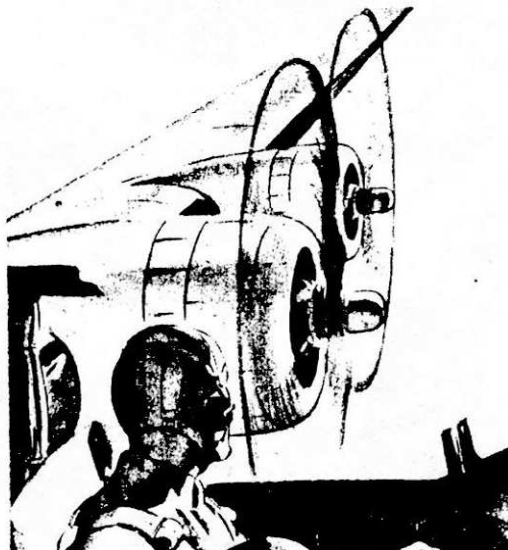
15TH AIR FORCE REUNION HUGE SUCCESS

Ben Franklin of the 15th Air Force Association can rest easy after pulling off a great reunion that was rated the best ever by all of those who attended. The Seattle Reunion drew 1100 happy people this last July from a cross section of most 15th AF units. Bob Lehnerr, the Seattle host and committee chairman is to be congratulated for a first class and very professional job of organizing and coordinating the various events.

Two groups, the 460th and 463rd held their reunions in conjunction with the 15th AF reunion. Because of the draw of the 15th, they reported greater attendance at their own reunions. They added an extra event to the schedule, that being their individual banquets held when the big reunion had a free evening.

Another important benefit of the joint reunions was the economy of scale that allowed negotiations with vendors and contracted services to be conducted from one office. This resulted in the signing up of superior events. This ranged all the way from the Salmon Bar-be-que to the Air Force Band of the Golden Wests' musical accompaniment of the multi-screen presentation, "History of the 15th Air Force". that was shown at the grand banquet.

The highlight of the reunion (even for B-24ers) was the fiftieth anniversary flight of the B-17. All of the units from both the 15th AF and the 8th AF holding reunions simultaneously, were guests of the Boeing Company at Boeing Field. It was estimated that close to 10,000 veterans were in attendance between both Air Forces. There were many WWII aircraft on static display including three B-17's that later did a fly over in conjunction with a B-25. It was the sound of synchronized reciprocating engines that brought back the memories associated with large formation flying. To close your eyes for a few minutes the war would come rushing back with numbing suddenness. The Boeing Company took full charge of the afternoon, arranging the displays, providing transportation and lunch to all veterans and guests.



For your information the following units made up the wartime 15th Air Force Heavy Bomb Groups.

Wings

5TH WING (B-17'S Groups)

2nd, 97th, 98th, 99th, 301st, 463rd,
483rd.

47TH WING (B-24'S)
376th, 449th, 450th.

49TH WING (B-24'S)
451st, 461st, 484th.

55TH WING (B-24'S)
460th, 464th, 465th, 484th.

304TH WING (B-24'S)
454th, 455th, 456th, 459th.

15TH SPECIAL GROUP

859TH B SQ. (B-24'S),
885TH B Sq.
(B-17'S & B-24'S)

CAMPAIGN CREDITS

The following list of Campaign medals were issued to Army Air Force personnel serving with the 15th Air Force during the Second world war. Eligibility is dependent on dates of European Service. (Source 15th AF Anniversary Program)

HQ 15TH AF

Naples-Foggia(Air)(War Dept.
GO-96,10/31/45
Rome- Arno(War Dept. GO-99/11/6/45

Air Combat, EAME Theater

11/7/41 to 9/2/45
Air Offensive, Europe 7/4/42 to 6/5/44
Naples-Foggia (Air) 8/18/43 to 1/12/44
Anzio 1/22/44 to 5/24/44
Rome-Arno 3/22/44 to 9/944
Normandy 6/6/44 to 7/24/44
Northern France 7/25/44 to 9/14/44
Southern France 8/15/44 to 9/14/44
North Appennines 9/10/44 to 4/4/45
Rhineland 9/15/44 to 3/21/45
Central Europe 3/22/44 to
3/11/45
Po Valley 4/5/44 to 5/8/45

15TH AIR FORCE STATISTICS

CASUALTIES

Killed in Action 2,703
Missing in Action
12,359
Wounded in Action
2,553

AWARDS

Medal of Honor 2
Dist. Service Cross 2
Dist. Service Medal 13
Silver Star 939
Legion of Merit 46
Dist. Flying Cross 11,985
Soldiers Medal 729
Bronze Star 2,741
Air Medal 163,651
Dist. Unit Citations 63

The 15th Air Force will hold its next reunion in 1987 at a site somewhere in the mid-west. Members wishing to join the 15th Air Force Association should write to :

15th Air Force Association
PO BOX 6325
March Air Force Base, CA 92518