



## Bringing the Thunder: The Missions of a World War II B-29 Pilot in the Pacific

*Gordon Bennett Robertson Jr.*

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The B-29 bomber was made to soar in thin, cold air, dropping its massive bomb load from heights so great that the crews might never see their targets through the clouds below. That was just fine with Ben Robertson, pilot in command of one of the big four engine bombers hammering Japan to its knees in a nonstop bombing campaign in the Pacific. When General LeMay ordered the B-29s to switch tactics from daylight, high-altitude bombing runs to nighttime, low-level runs, Ben's attitude changed. What was once seen as simply dangerous--bombing Japan--now seemed a whole lot more like suicide.

## Bringing the Thunder: The Missions of a World War II B-29 Pilot in the Pacific Details

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## From Reader Review Bringing the Thunder: The Missions of a World War II B-29 Pilot in the Pacific for online ebook

### Leonard says

A very good memoir, it is the first I have read about the B-29. What a remarkable airplane. It was developed and put into production in such a short time it is mind boggling to think how fantastic an aircraft it was in the War. It was almost all brand new, just off the sci-fi pages when it went into service. It is an amazing record that so many young pilots and crew were able to fly it to its potential in such a short amount of time. 3,400 miles in 15.5 hours then turn around and do it again the next day. What a grueling test of men and machine.

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### Cassandra Keitz says

#### Awesome page turner

GR takes you back in time and makes you feel like you were there. Always good to hear from those that fought for our freedom and the real struggles and situations that you don't get in the classroom.

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### Jack says

This was a biography of a WWII B-29 pilot who flew 35 missions over Japan. It is a real life, first person account of the career of a pilot, from when he joined the Army and a little of his background on why he wanted to fly planes. It was a very insightful look into one of the members of the Greatest Generation and his thoughts of why he was over there, the risks he took and the missions he flew. If you are interested in WWII biographies, this is a good one. If you are interested in history, again this is a good one.

Yes, we inflicted devastation on Japan during this time and it was horrible. We bombed civilian targets to convince the Japanese government to sue for peace. Yet despite the bombing campaign, where many US airmen were lost, the Japanese wouldn't give up. Yes, the Atom Bomb we dropped caused horrific devastation to the citizens of Japan, yet, many more lives on both sides would have been lost.

Mr. Robertson's targeted 35 missions were over just as the A-bombs were dropped, and he wasn't a part of those two missions, but this is a story of a hero who put his life on the line 35 times to secure peace and freedom.

I really enjoyed this book and learned a great deal about the Army Air Corps during WWII. Well written. Honest. Interesting.

Well worth the read.

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### jakekellsaol.com says

#### Important Historic Remembrance

A hard to put down book. Enjoyed it very much. Easy writing style. Saddened by the passing of the author. He epitomizes the greatest generation that saved us all from the horrors of loss of this war. His crew was surely blessed to have such a proficient aircraft commander. Japan during the war was more ruthless than today's North Korea. This should be required reading in both Japan and USA.

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### **Sarah Crawford says**

This is the story of one B-29 bomber pilot in World War II. It covers his training in a lot of planes of different types before he ended up finally flying the B-29 (which happens to be one of my two favorite planes of the world. The P-38 is my other favorite plane.)

There is no doubt that he had to go through a lot of training including a good number of courses in different topics and flying a variety of planes, racking up a lot of air hours. He had to repeat this process with the B-29s.

He also discusses his crew mates, the various missions that they went on and the various problems that they encountered including flak, enemy fighters and problems with the plane itself. They flew bombing missions over Japan using both regular bombs and incendiary devices which basically destroyed square miles of a city at a time.

It's also very obvious that he still holds a lot of anger against the Japanese, noting the terrible atrocities they committed during the war including the massacre at Nanking, experiments on captured men, balloon bombs and mistreatment (to say the least) of prisoners of war.

A really good book.

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### **Betsy says**

I gave up on this book partway through because of the author's attitude. I'm surprised he could write at all since he was continually patting himself on the back. The men who served in the B-29s definitely deserved better than this, and so do its readers.

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### **Jeff Dawson says**

A Thundering 5 Stars!

B-29 perspective.

An absolutely excellent memoir! I have read many from this time era, but nothing with this flavor. Mr. Robertson is going to take you on a travel few have traversed. This is nothing more than a normal American answering the "call to arms" and fulfilling the duty to his country with no whining or complaining.

Many of us have seen the movie or heard of the plane, "Memphis Bell." Why is that important? Because the crew of the Bell were allowed to rotate back to the states after twenty-five missions. Not so with the B-29

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crews;thirty-five missions before you go home. That alone is paramount, but what is even more remarkable is that calculates to over 225,000 miles and 350+ hours of fly time over 90% water. For most of us, that would seem unrealistic, but then the men and women who flew the airs of the Pacific during WWII never wavered from their assigned tasks. They just did it.

Mr. Robertson will take you along in his newly minted B-29 on each and every raid. That might seem monotonous, but than, that is the beauty of the book. You will fly with he and his crew and understand what it meant to be a B-29 pilot. Very refreshing.

I'd like to address a couple of side notes. We have been inundated over the past decades of inter department rivalries between branches of the Armed Services. You won't find that in this work. He his very thankful for the Marines who took Guam, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. He was humbled when he was able to walk old battlefields and witness the carnage of the landscape the Marines and Navy dealt their opponents: The Japs. Yep, this isn't politically correct in its language or reference to the enemy, but that's how it was in the 40's. The Japs attacked Pearl Harbor and the men and women on the United States were gonna make em pay.

I can not recommend this book enough for the avid or casual reader of WWII.

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### **Diego Palomino says**

As a child I became fascinated with aircraft of WWII. I collected and built models of that period, the Japanese, German, British and US. As I as a teen I became interested in the history of the war and when video games became the vogue I had one of the B-29. I would spend hours playing it and never really thought about the human element involved as an adult I started to to wonder about this aspect. When I discovered this book I immediately started reading it. It is a very good read as Robertson puts you in the pilot's seat. It made me realize what it takes to do this kind of job, the difficulty, the skill the stamina, sacrifice and courage. Although war is not what most people wish for, it is sometimes unavoidable and this conflict.

certainly was. For not being a trained author Robertson does a great job. If you are interested in reading about this period in history this is a must. it covers the training, preparation, the missions, their purpose the pressure, the psychological consequences of having to do such a job and the challenge of overcoming the fear to in order to perform and succeed despite the possibility of death.

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### **Glen Galloway says**

#### **Good read**

Enjoyed the historical reading and the first hand account of being a B 29 pilot during WW II. This is an excellent story of this day and the trials that young men and women had to contend with during the early 40s.

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### **Mike says**

I'm giving it **3 Stars** for a factual, straightforward story of a B-29 pilot and crew in the airwar against Japan. His first mission was the great firebombing raid on Tokyo and his last mission was the last of the war on Aug 14th. I enjoyed the stories of his pilot training and preparation for war. But many may get bored with the

lengthy lead up to getting in combat. His style is not fancy or histrionic. Just the facts. Good picture of flying the B-29 in combat.

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### **Brian says**

Very good, well written WW2 memoir that offers great insights into B-29 missions from the Marianas. This memoir will give great insights into the training of B-29 pilots, their missions, what a tour of duty looked like, their operations, and their challenges.

The epilogue is also interesting because it gives insights into the mentality of the generation that fought WW2.

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### **Sean says**

This biography of a B-29 Bomber Pilot's experience before and during World War 2 really helped show me another side of the war that hasn't received as much popular attention. There are plenty of movies and HBO series about the Army and Marine experience during the war, and really not so much attention is paid to the thousands of pilots that provided air cover for those soldiers.

Mr. Robertson flew 35 successful missions from Guam to Japan, concluding with the final US bombing of Japan before their surrender was finally announced. Living in spartan conditions compared to a Navy friend from home stationed across the island, Mr. Robertson and his crew of 10 men had to fly straight and level into each bombing run, no matter how much flak was exploding in the air in front of and around them, and irrespective of the Japanese fighters buzzing around on the periphery of their gunners' sights.

I recommend reading this book to enhance your historical perspective and learn something more about the "Greatest Generation", which truly put everything on the line to keep the world free from tyranny on a global scale.

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### **Robert M. Roth MD says**

#### **Good memoir**

A well written book about a pilot's story from training to the final air war over Japan while serving as the aircraft commander of a B 29. I would have liked to learn how his life progressed after the war, but the story is limited to his war time service. The epilogue describes his feelings and justification of the fire bombing of Japan and the use of atomic weapons. An interesting and probably a prevailing sentiment of the time.

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### **Matthew Dambro says**

This was a truly excellent memoir of the B-29 campaign in the Marianas. The author flew with the 29th BG out of Guam. My father was a radarman in the 468th BG out of Tinian. These teenagers saved the world with an untried weapon system and a fanatical enemy. There is a reason they are called "the greatest generation".

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**joseph schrage says**

**Not a bad read.**

Not a bad read. I've read a lot of books about the war. This one is kind of in the middle.

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