

Loud, Hot, Cramped . . . and Totally Awesome

Written by Jeff Evans

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Story and photos by Jeff Evans, publisher

It was getting hot. And it was cramped. But more than anything else it was loud. Really loud. Teeth-rattling, bone-jarring loud. And squeezed into one of the little metal jump seats below the top turret of a vintage B-25 Mitchell Bomber, I was right between the twin engines hanging just outside under each wing. The noise made it impossible to communicate with the photographer crammed into the seat right next to me. I was thankful for the ear protection I was given. And I was thrilled.

I had the great good fortune to take in ride in *Panchito*, the B-25 flown by the Disabled American Veterans Flight Team.

Panchi
to was
in town for the 2015 MCAS Air Show along with other vintage aircraft like the Skytypers' 75-year old SNJ Trainers and a beautiful P-51 Lightning named Bum Steer. The Navy's Blue Angels were certainly the belles of the ball, but the vintage planes seemed to evoke a special kind of reverence. You could see it on the faces of people as they walked up close to them. They gazed at these planes and their eyes got a far-away look. These were the planes that really saw action. These were the planes that won the war. These were the planes flown by The Greatest Generation.

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