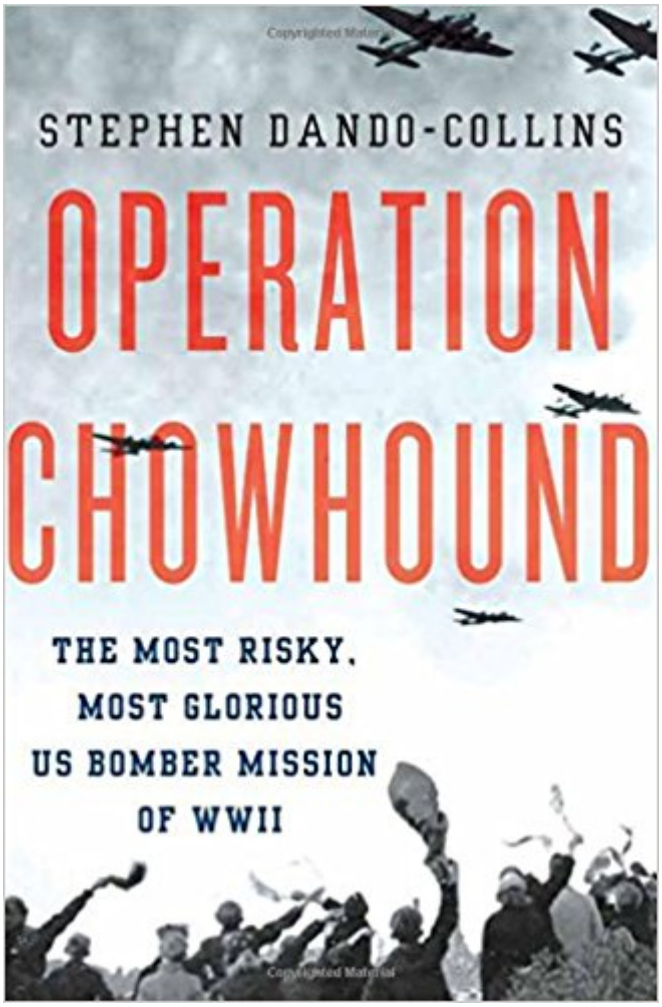
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Operation Chowhound: The Most Risky, Most Glorious US Bomber Mission Of WWII



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Synopsis

Beginning with a crazy plan hatched by a suspect prince, and an even crazier reliance on the word of the Nazis, Operation Chowhound was devised. Between May 1 and May 8, 1945, 2,268 military units flown by the USAAF, dropped food to 3.5 million starving Dutch civilians in German-occupied Holland. It took raw courage to fly on Operation Chowhound, as American aircrews never knew when the German AAA might open fire on them or if Luftwaffe fighters might jump them. Flying at 400 feet, barely above the tree tops, with guns pointed directly at them, they would have no chance to bail out if their B-17s were hitÃ¢â ¬â ¢and yet, over eight days, 120,000 German troops kept their word, and never fired on the American bombers. As they flew, grateful Dutch civilians spelled out "Thanks Boys" in the tulip fields below. Many Americans who flew in Operation Chowhound would claim it was the best thing they did in the war. In this gripping narrative, author Stephen Dando-Collins takes the reader into the rooms where Operation Chowhound was born, into the aircraft flying the mission, and onto the ground in the Netherlands with the civilians who so desperately needed help. James Bond creator Ian Fleming, Hollywood actress Audrey Hepburn, as well as Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and Churchill all play a part in this story, creating a compelling, narrative read.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“Prolific military historian Dando-Collins focuses on Chowhound, the U.S. mission to deliver food to Dutch civilians behind German linesÃ¢â ¬Â¦this absorbing, well-written account of a lesser-known operation should appeal to anyone interested in World War II, aerial campaigns, or

relief missions.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Library JournalÃ¢â ¬Å“From Ancient Rome to the final days of WWII, Stephen Dando-Collins can be relied on to tell engaging stories with verve. His latest, Operation Chowhound, reveals the machinations behind WWII's greatest humanitarian missions.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Professor Peter Stanley, UNSW CanberraÃ¢â ¬Å“Against the backdrop of World War II's final days in Europe, Stephen Dando-Collins chronicles one of the most extraordinary but least known operations of the war. His narrative deftly places the reader beside the planners and the air crews behind the missions as well as the Dutch recipients of the food drops and the German occupiers who sanctioned the operation. Well-researched and clearly-written, this book explains why Chowhound was such a heroic precedent for the famed Berlin Airlift of several years later.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Phil Samponaro, Associate Professor of History, University of Texas at BrownsvilleÃ¢â ¬Å“Operation Chowhound reveals one of the most neglected operations of World War II, the massive air campaign to feed the starving Dutch in the dwindling days of the conflict. In the last weeks of the war American and British B-17s, B-24s and Avro Lancasters dropped tons of food parcels at strategic points in Nazi occupied Holland where the Dutch population had been near starvation for months. A touchy ceasefire held between the allies and Germans and thousands of Dutch citizens were saved. Stephen Dando-Collins has done a remarkable job in this interesting and informative account of the war's last major air campaign.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢David P. Colley, author of Safely Rest, Blood For Dignity and Decision At StrasbourgÃ¢â ¬Å“A must read for historians, military buffs, humanitarians and others interested in a compelling adaptation of a historic event into an entertaining book. Again, Stephen Dando-Collins has incorporated exhaustive and accurate research, for which he is known, into a story that transports the reader to the time, place and stead of the participants of this significant humanitarian operation in the midst of an active military conflict.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢John Seldomridge, attorney, educator and former Armor Officer, U.S. ArmyÃ¢â ¬Å“An illuminating tale, Operation Chowhound is a true story plucked from the pages of history and brought to life with an imaginative style of writingÃ¢â ¬Â¦Dando-Collins draws the reader into the story of this little-known operation near the end of WWII, [and]Ã¢â ¬Â¦brings each character to life, contributing to a thrilling story of good triumphing over evil.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Robert Simko, publisher and editor, The Broadsheet, New York CityÃ¢â ¬Å“A gripping read, the true tale of a little known, highly courageous and crucial piece of World War II history.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Ross Fitzgerald, The Australian

Stephen Dando-Collins is an award-winning military historian with numerous highly praised books on ancient history ranging from Imperial Rome to the American west to Australia, some of which

include Legions of Rome and Caesar’s Legion. Today, Stephen’s books appear in many languages and he has an army of loyal readers wherever his books are published around the world, in countries including Australia, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Poland, Albania and Korea.

This book tells the inspirational story of Operation Chowhound, the 8th Air Force (and Bomber Command, under Operation Manna) effort to deliver food to the Dutch population who were starving to death in the last days of the war. In early 1945 the Netherlands were still firmly occupied by the Nazis and worse, they had the means to destroy the dikes and flood most of the country if they were forced to retreat. Eisenhower and his chief of staff worked out a deal with the Nazis: Allied bombers, which no longer had targets to speak of in the Reich, would drop food from very low altitude and speed. In exchange, the German flak would not fire at the bombers.In this surreal endtime of the war the truce held and soon food was being "bombed" at pre-agreed upon locations while bombers flew specific "lanes" to reach their "targets." And the flak (for the most part) did not fire on the aircraft, even though they certainly could have caused enormous damage to the bomber fleet.I loved the writing and recommend this for any student of WWII.

Like most of us exposed to WWII is school we never hear of these kinds of operations. We get endless discussion on the Battle of the Bulge and the bombing of Berlin but this operation literally saved a country and a civilization and culture that gave a lot to mankind. And all we did was drop food from aircraft for 10 days. Air crews who were part of this said that it changed their view of the war and affected them in such a positive manner that they were changed for life. The German occupation of the Netherlands was so harsh that in the year prior to this food drop, no infants survived, citizens ate tulips to survive and because children were ignored they walked and bicycled all over the countryside from cities to barter small amounts of food from farms to take back to families. This is a story that needs to be included in the study of WWII. Ian Flemming was part of this story as was Audrey Hepburn who was starving with her family.

Very educational and enlightening about missions flown by the 8th Air Force at the end of WWII. I enjoyed reading and learning the details about these life-saving food drops to the Dutch people.

As a Dutch toddler, I vaguely remember seeing the food drop on the dunes near the airport in Amsterdam. My father brought the rescue to clearity around the dinner table after we emigrated to

the US.

excellent true story about the food relief drops to the hungry Dutch citizens in ww2.

I liked it because my wife experienced the hunger winter in Amsterdam

nicely written

Years before the Berlin Airlift of 1948-9, Operation Chowhound delivered tons of food to starving civilians in Nazi-occupied Netherlands. Under the codename Operation Manna, the British and Canadian Air Forces dropped food parcels in Holland and the Americans used the jauntier codename Operation Chowhound for their part in the effort. The program lasted less than two weeks, right up until the end of the war in Europe. If the Dutch had had to wait those last few days, many more people would have starved to death. Not only were the Dutch people relieved and thrilled to get the air-dropped food, but the airmen who crewed the bombers were happy to be part of a mission that didn't involve dropping bombs and being fired on.Of course there were risks involved and military historian Stephen Dando-Collins goes into them in detail. Also of interest were the human stories behind the operation, both from the military and civilian standpoints. People who would later become famous were peripherally involved, but their stories are only included here because of their later fame, such as Audrey Hepburn, who was one of the starving Dutch, and Walter Cronkite, who was a war correspondent. Ian Fleming and Farley Mowat also make cameo appearances.Perhaps the most fascinating character in the drama is Prince Bernhard, a German who had voluntarily joined Nazi organizations in the 1930s, then married the Dutch heir to the throne, Juliana. His lobbying of the Americans, including General Eisenhower, were crucial to getting Operations Chowhound and Manna implemented. He may have had a Nazi past, but his sympathies were entirely with the Dutch by that time and continued to be for the rest of his long life.At a little over 200 pages, this is a quick and detailed slice of World War II that is more upbeat than the usual military history.

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