

# **B25J, PANCHITO**

**Delaware Aviation Museum Foundation  
Sussex County Airport  
Georgetown Delaware  
Phone 443-458-8926  
PanchitoB25@aol.com**

**Year Built:** 1944 at Kansas City, Kansas  
**Engines** Wright R-2600 14 cyl @ 1700Hp  
**Wing Span:** 67 ft. 7 in.  
**Length:** 53 ft. 6 in.  
**Height:** 16 ft. 4 in.  
**Empty Weight:** 19,500 pounds  
**Max. Gross Weight:** 38,800 pounds  
**Max. Speed:** 324 mph  
**Service Ceiling:** 24,500 ft.  
**Max. Range:** 2,700 miles  
**Bomb Load:** 3,000 lbs = 6 x 500 lb. bombs (Typical) or assortment of bombs, depth charges, incendiary bombs, cluster bombs, rockets, or a torpedo.  
**Armament:** 13 x 0.50 cal Browning M-2 Machine guns  
**Crew of Six:** pilot, co-pilot, bombardier, turret gunner, waist gunner, tail gunner

**Total number of B-25's built: 9,816    Number flyable in the World today: 32**

The North American B-25 was one of the most famous twin-engine medium bombers used during World War II and the only combat airplane to see action in every front of every theater of the war. With some versions having as many as eighteen (18) .50 caliber machine guns, it was the most heavily armed aircraft of WWII. It was produced in greater numbers than any other American twin-engine combat aircraft. No doubt part of its heroic stature derives from its namesake, the outspoken Gen. Billy Mitchell who proved once and for all that bombers could destroy targets, and that wars would nevermore be decided only on land or sea. The B-25 achieved worldwide fame on April 18, 1942 when sixteen B-25's under the command of Lt. Col. James Doolittle were launched from the aircraft carrier HORNET and attacked five Japanese cities in a daring raid that brought attacks to the Japanese homeland for the first time in 2600 years.

This B-25 was delivered to the USAAF too late to see any action in World War II but was used in various duties until assigned to Air Training Command in 1948 where it was used until 1954. In 1955 it was put through the Hughes conversion to a TB25N configuration and served with various Air National Guard units until being retired to Davis-Monthan AFB in 1958. The B-25 was sold to its first civilian owner in 1959 and was used as a fire bomber in Arizona, and then later as an orange grove sprayer in Florida.

It was immaculately restored to original WWII condition by Tom Reilly Vintage Aircraft ("Bombertown") in Kissimmee Florida in 1986 and finished as "Panchito", a B-25J S/N 43-28147 that served with the 396 Bomb Squadron, 41<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group, 7<sup>th</sup> Air force, stationed in the Central Pacific. "Panchito" was scheduled for its 13<sup>th</sup> bombing run to Japan on the day the Japanese surrendered. If the Japanese had not surrendered, it would have been involved in the invasion of mainland Japan. Instead, all of the 396 BG airplanes were flown to Clark Field in the Philippines and scrapped.

Living History Flights are available for a \$425 donation. Please call the museum Ride reservation line: 443-458-8926.