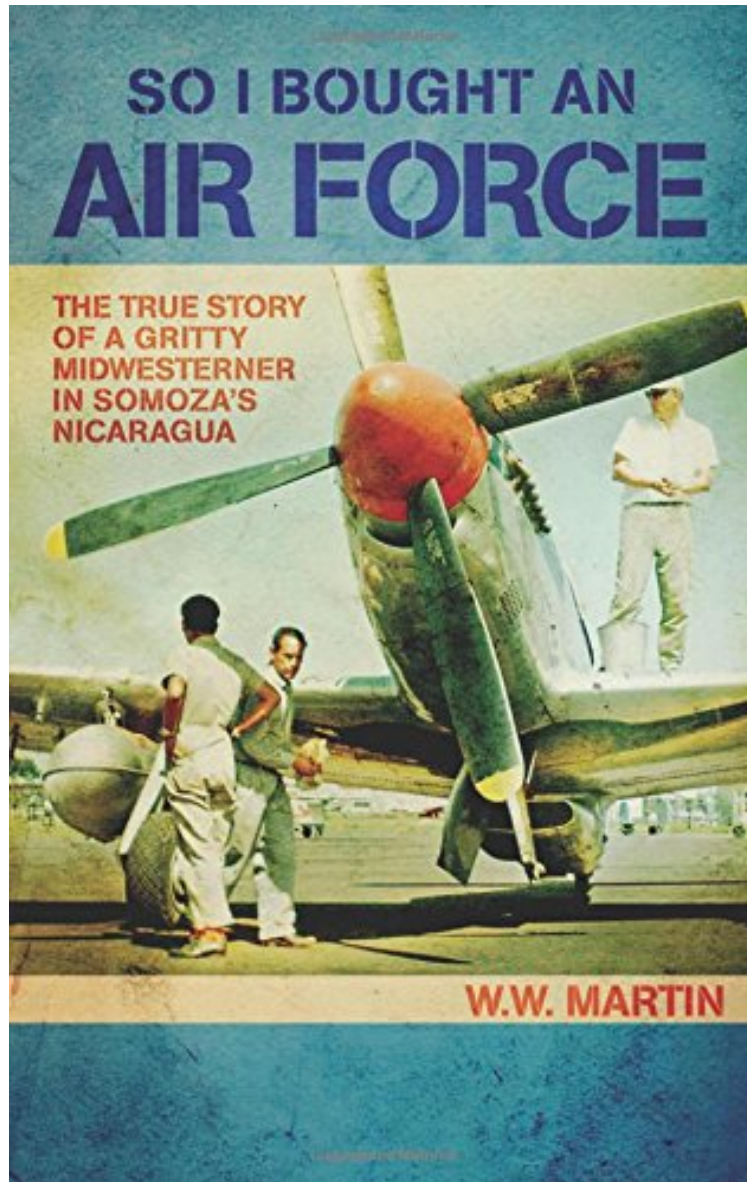


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So I Bought an Air Force: The True Story of a Gritty Midwesterner in Somoza's Nicaragua

W. W. Martin

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W. W. Martin : So I Bought an Air Force: The True Story of a Gritty Midwesterner in Somoza's Nicaragua before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised So I Bought an Air Force: The True Story of a Gritty Midwesterner in Somoza's Nicaragua:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Great behind-the-scenes look at Mustangs south of the border
By Nicholas A. Veronico I was really looking forward to reading Will Martin's "So I Bought An Air Force..." hoping to gain an insight into the recovery of the Costa Rican and Nicaraguan warbirds and I was not disappointed. Not since John Dienst and Dan Hagedorn's "North American F-51 Mustangs in Latin Air Force Service" (1985) have warbird enthusiasts had such a great behind-the-scenes look at Mustangs south of the border. Martin's tales of shady people, corrupt officials, and mechanics working to a different standard were balanced with people who came to his aid just in the nick of time. On his journey to recover the fleet of Mustangs, he certainly met the right people at the right time. My heart went out to Martin's long suffering wife and kids who had to deal with his long absences from home and the constant possibility that he may never return, lost in the jungle having gone down in an unreliable or ill-prepared World War II warbird. The tales of his forced landings and the total loss of a number of Mustangs – N6153U (possibly 44-63655), N6162U (pos. 44-63649), and N6170U (pos. 44-73193) – and Thunderbolts – N6148U (pos. 44-88548) – can be seen in the more than 60 color photos shot by Martin during his travels. The author's ability to prevent more aircraft from being lost is directly related to his pre-flight attention to detail and the knowledge he gained from other experienced pilots willing to share their knowledge. If I have one comment, "So I Bought An Air Force" could have benefitted from a serial number list of the aircraft recovered and where they are now. Maybe that could be added to the book's website? Congratulations to Mr. Martin for a fine book. This volume is a great addition to the Mustang's historical record.
Nicholas A. Veronico Author: "Hidden Warbirds: The Epic Stories of Finding, Recovering, and Rebuilding WWII's Lost Aircraft" 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Nicaragua 1960 and the tale of P-51 Mustangs
By tiger So I Bought an Air Force: The True Story of a Gritty Midwesterner in Somoza's Nicaragua So I Bought an Air Force: The True Story of a Gritty Midwesterner in Somoza's Nicaragua Move over Tom Clancy, there is a new military history writer in town, only this time the history is real, not a made up adventure novel. It's Nicaragua 1960, part of the Somoza Era and the attempt to save a fleet of WW II war-birds, mainly P-51 Mustangs for History. The Author against overwhelming odds was able to save a number of P-51 Mustangs, the plane many historians have said hastened the fall of the Third Reich by their superior performance over the ME-109 German Fighter. The story is real, the action is real, and it's a great read for all WW II Aircraft Enthusiasts. I just bought 7 Books for family and friends for Christmas
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. that I contacted the author to let him know how much I not only enjoyed the book
By J. Heiskell When I started reading this book, I had a very hard time putting it down! Following the author's story from the get go, he takes you through all the seemingly impossible tasks of getting these planes back to the USA, and I felt as if I was there, facing life threatening situations. In my opinion, this is a must read. I was so compelled, that I contacted the author to let him know how much I not only enjoyed the book, but respected him for having the fortitude to accomplish bringing back these awesome warbirds. He even replied to me, and told me I mad his day! Thank you Will Martin.

Nicaraguan strongman General Anastasio Somoza is making room for the modern jets sent down by his Cold War ally, the United States. Will Martin, a 34-year-old civilian pilot, has just suffered the loss of his family business in Chicago and is looking to make a fresh start. So I Bought An Air Force is the wild but true tale of how Martin buys the Nicaraguan Air Force's fleet of P-51 Mustangs, F-47 Thunderbolts, and C-45 Expeditors and his struggles to get his planes back up to the U.S. With stunning color photographs from the author's personal archive, So I Bought An Air Force gives the reader a vivid look at the rough-and-tumble world of 1960s Latin America from the cockpit of some of the hottest American aircraft ever built.

"Will Martin shows us how guts, speculation, and skill can turn rusty airframes into future warbirds. So I Bought an Air Force delivers a great flying adventure story that is absolutely riveting and inspiring." --Walter J. Boyne, Colonel, USAF (Ret), former director, Smithsonian National Air Space Museum "A grand adventure"--Air Classics magazine "[Martin's] lively, fresh narrative leads the reader through crash landings in remote areas, encounters with machete-toting civilians, treacherous mercenaries, and obfuscating embassy personnel....Destined to be a classic, this is a book you'll want to read and re-read."--Air Power History Magazine "An important addition to the history of the Mustang in particular and the Warbird Movement in general."--Challenge Aviation Book Club "[Martin has] a terrific ability to tell his tale...with thirty-two pages of amazing photographs from his own archives."--Warbird Digest "I could hardly wait to turn the page as the story unfolded. A true adventure most can only dream of."--Rick Siegfried, Past President, EAA Warbirds of America "It's a vivid account....full of mishaps, dangerous missions and intrigue."--The Daily Southtown "So I Bought an Air Force is one great read. It transports the reader back to the 1960s world of Somoza's Nicaragua and details the amazing efforts of one VERY determined visionary to save some legendary aircraft. Martin's tale would make a great movie. Recommended."--Michael O'Connor, Top 500 er "A gripping read...High adventure."--The Regional News "The book is...a great window into what Nicaragua was under Somoza, and I truly enjoyed reading it."--Tulio Soto, Co-Founder, Latin American Aviation Historical Society "As an aviation enthusiast and retired Air Force fighter pilot, I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. A unique and captivating story of one man's venture into buying vintage WWII aircraft from a foreign country and flying them back to the United States for

resale....I admire the talents he exhibited in carrying out this venture as a business man, aviator and diplomat. It took a person with great determination and true grit to see it through.... I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in aviation and adventure."--Jerry W. Tietge, B/Gen USAF (Ret) "Will is one heck of a pilot; he has great instincts and a keen feeling for the machine. I have no doubt that these attributes enabled him to survive the dramatic events that unfold in So I Bought an Air Force."--Darrell L. Anderson, Colonel, USAF (Ret)About the AuthorWill Martin holds a commercial pilot certificate and multi-engine and instrument ratings. Flying "El Gato," the P-51 Mustang he restored, he has performed in many air shows including Oshkosh, the Chicago Air and Water, the Commemorative Air Force, and the Illinois Antique Airplane Association B-17 Reunion. He founded the Squadron Four Warbird chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association and has been a featured speaker for numerous aviation and business groups. Martin has experience in a wide range of aircraft, having piloted more than forty different types of planes. Those he has owned include a Beechcraft C-45, D-18, T34B, Bonanza, and Queen Air; a North American P-51D, P-51TF, T-28A and a Navion; a Piper Apache; a Cessna 401 and 402; a Douglas B-26; and a Republic P-47. He and his wife Patricia live in a suburb of Chicago.