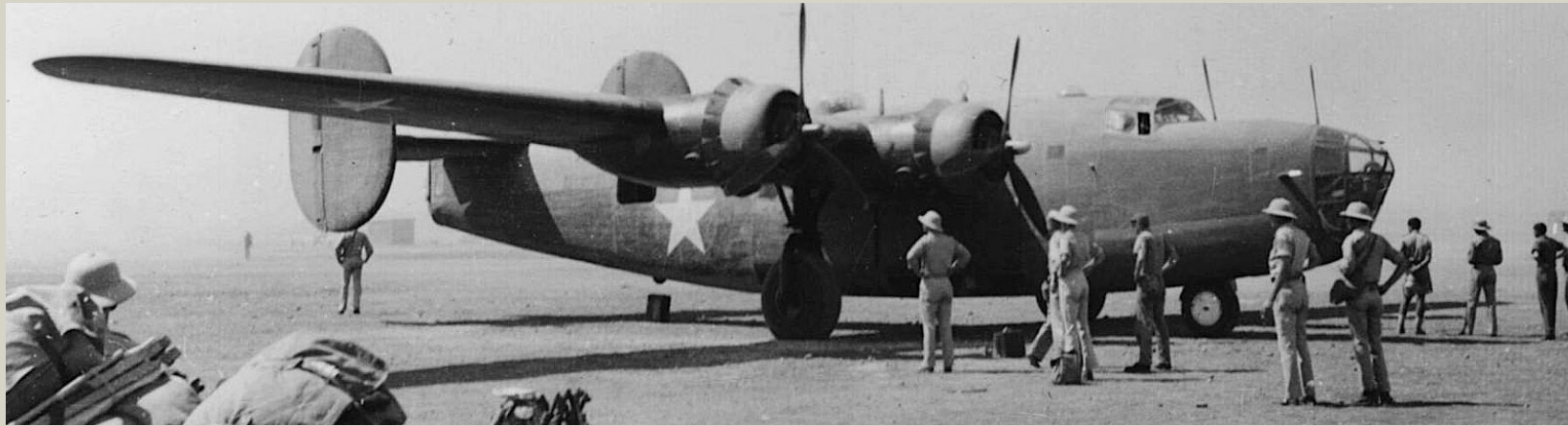


A legacy of war

An airstrip constructed at Aitutaki for military purposes during WWII results in a multi-million dollar tourist industry



"It is axiomatic in the history of mankind that economic and cultural developments follow rapidly in the wake of military penetration. There is every reason to expect that the same will be true of the South Seas following the current war, especially since they encompass one of the greatest undeveloped insular zones upon the earth and at the same time provide seaways and airways from western America to Australia, New Guinea, and the Dutch East Indies. There is little doubt that the air bases which have sprung up in these islands from the necessities of war will hasten the air-borne economic development of this region." - Captain Austin E. Fife, Historical Officer, US Air Force Service Command, July 1945

World War II was barely over when Captain Fife's words became reality. Aitutaki's unspoiled beauty was soon discovered and air-borne tourists began to visit this Pacific paradise. Aitutaki's airfield (referred to by the US Army as Amuri Field) remains as a significant legacy of US military occupation of this island during WWII. It's 75th anniversary was celebrated on 14 November 2017.



For more information visit www.aitutakiww2.com