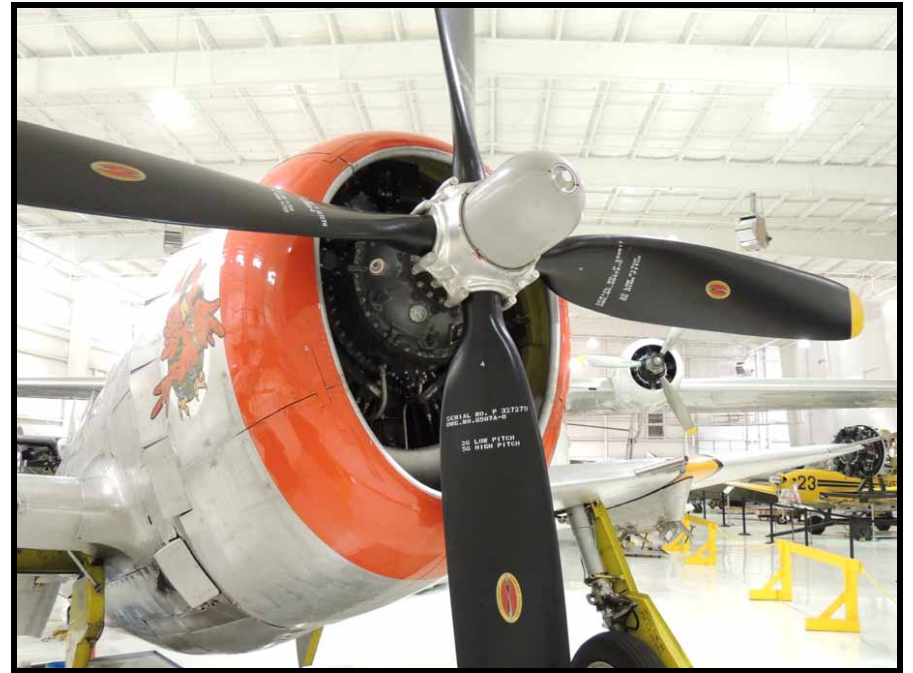


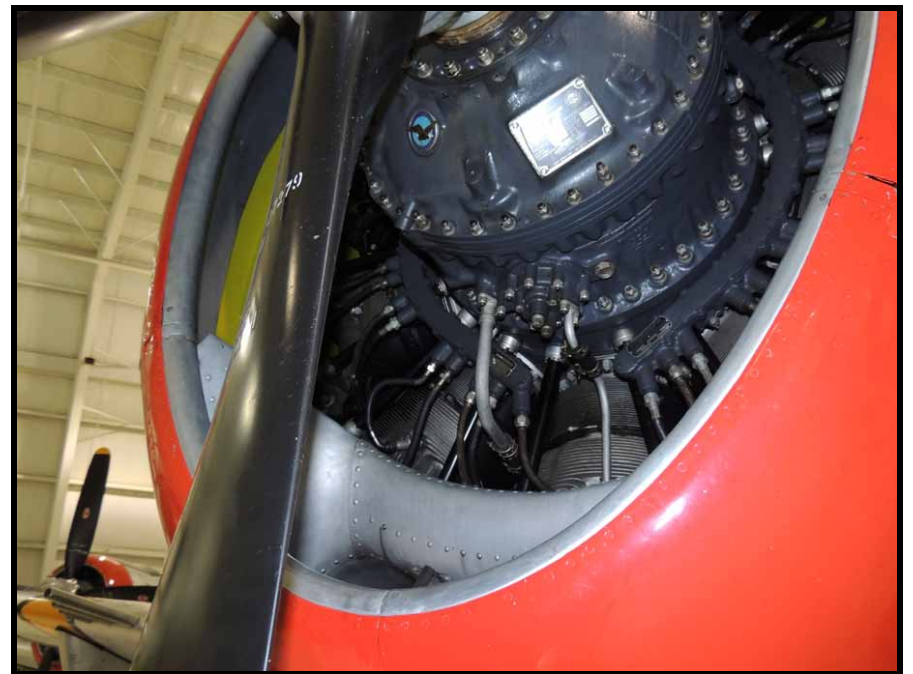
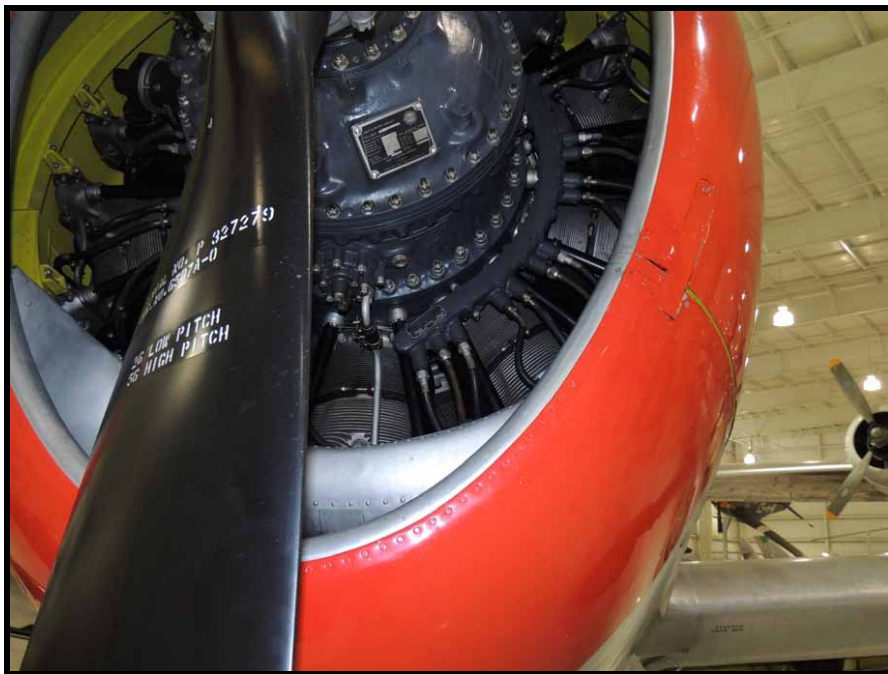
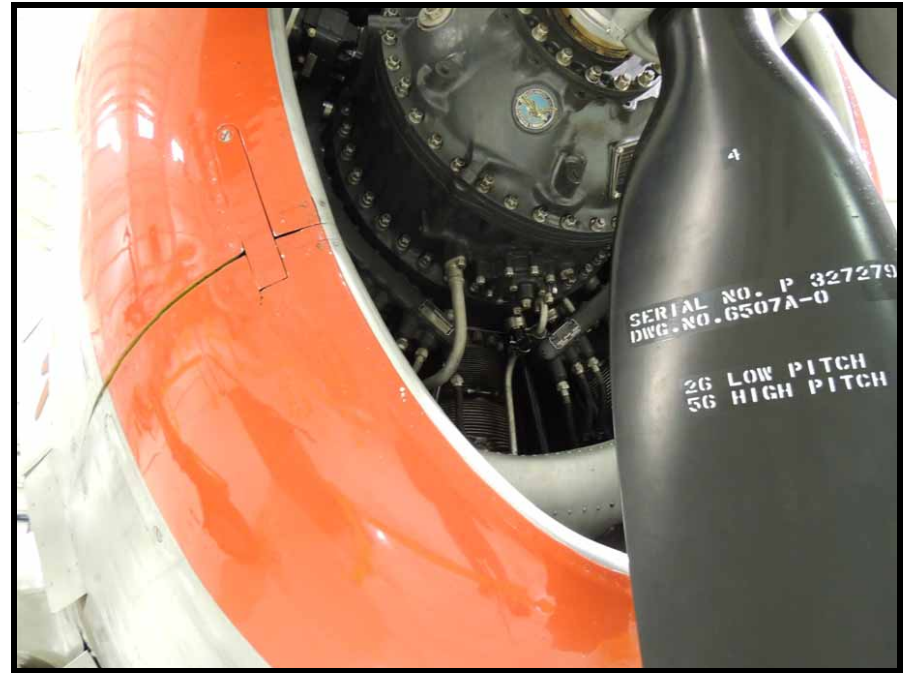
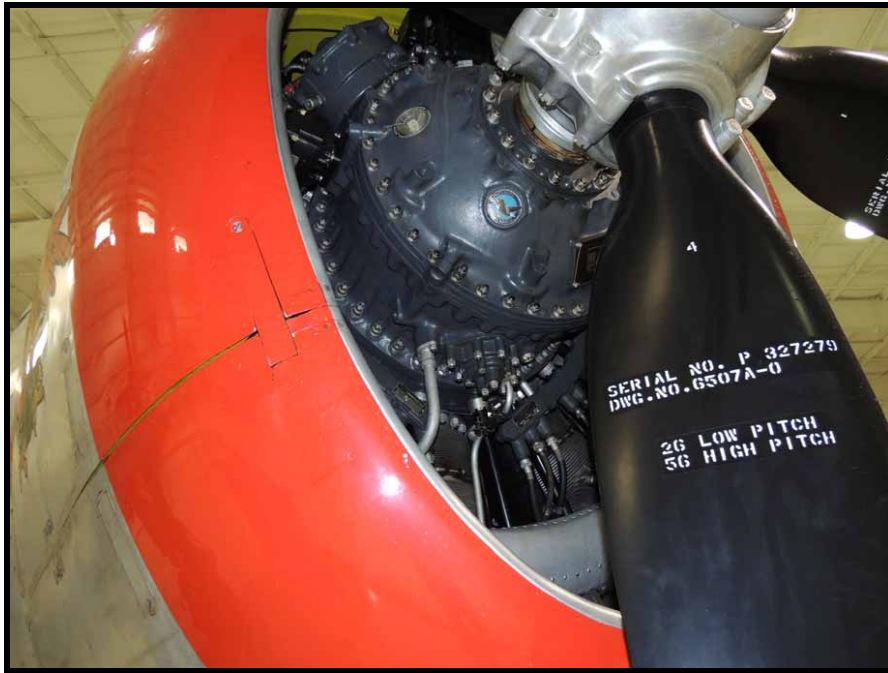


MIKE ASHEY PRODUCTIONS

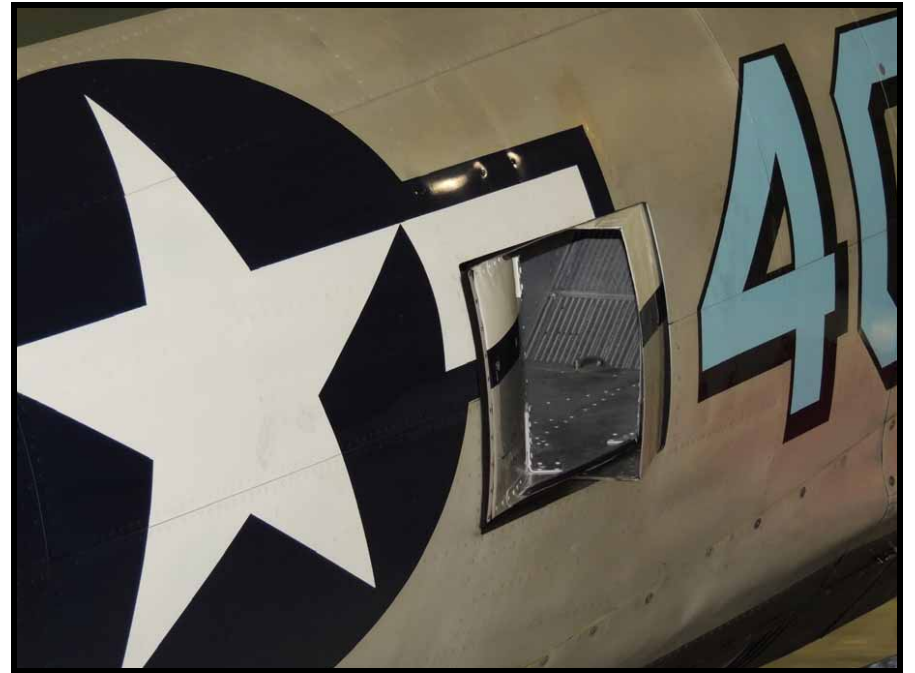
P-47D THUNDERBOLT

This P-47D is located at the Tennessee Museum of Aviation located in Sevierville, Tennessee. This aviation museum is privately owned and among its collection are two P-47D's in flying condition, a P-51 Mustang in superb condition and Douglas A-1 Skyraider.



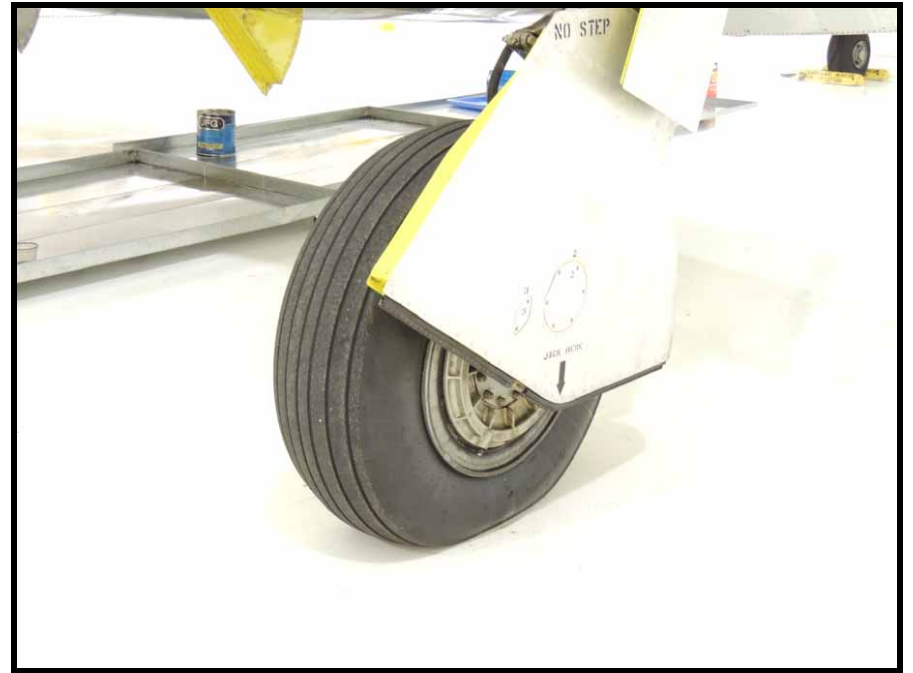




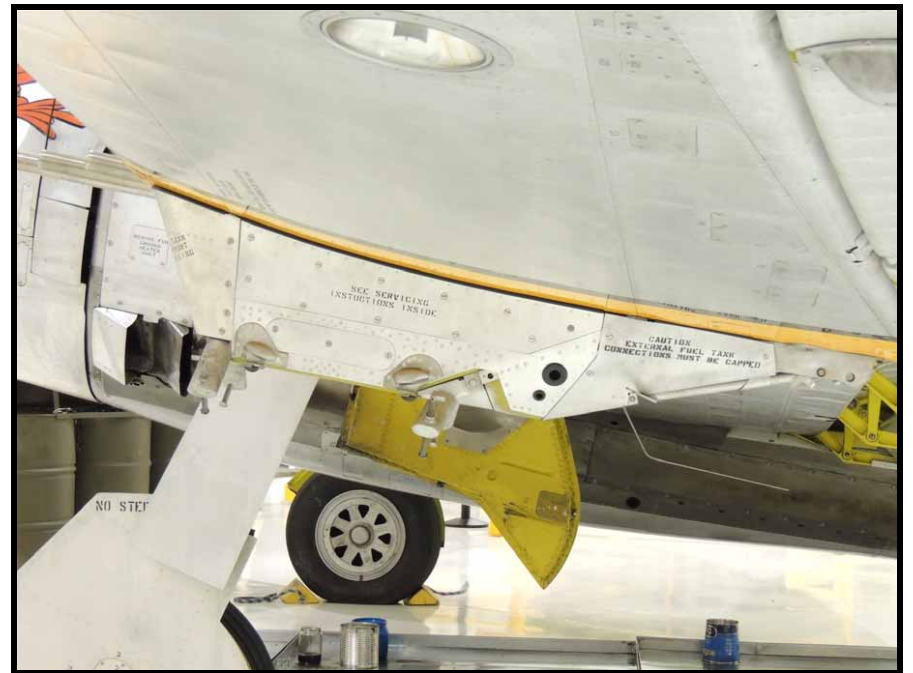




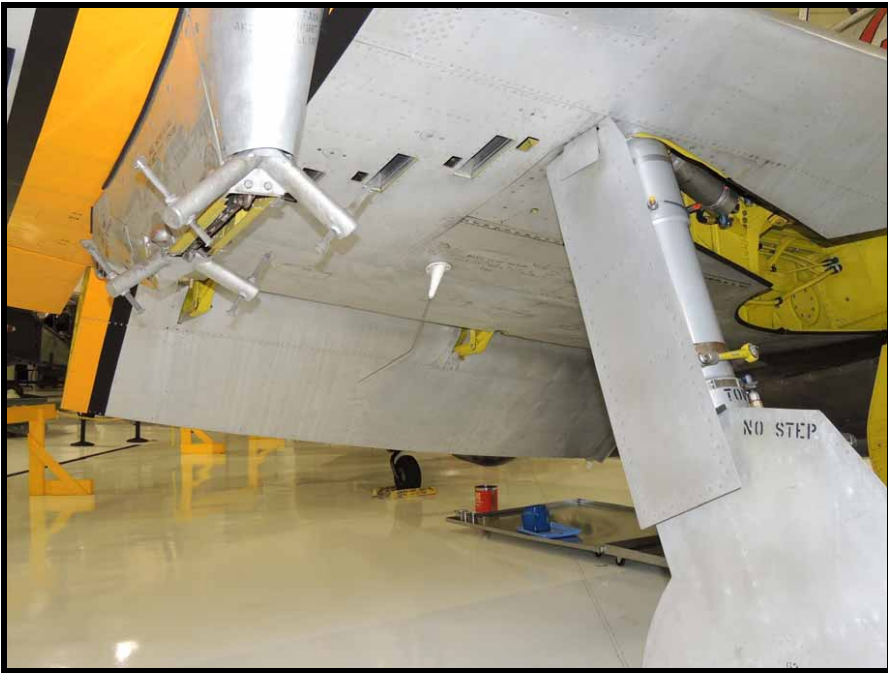


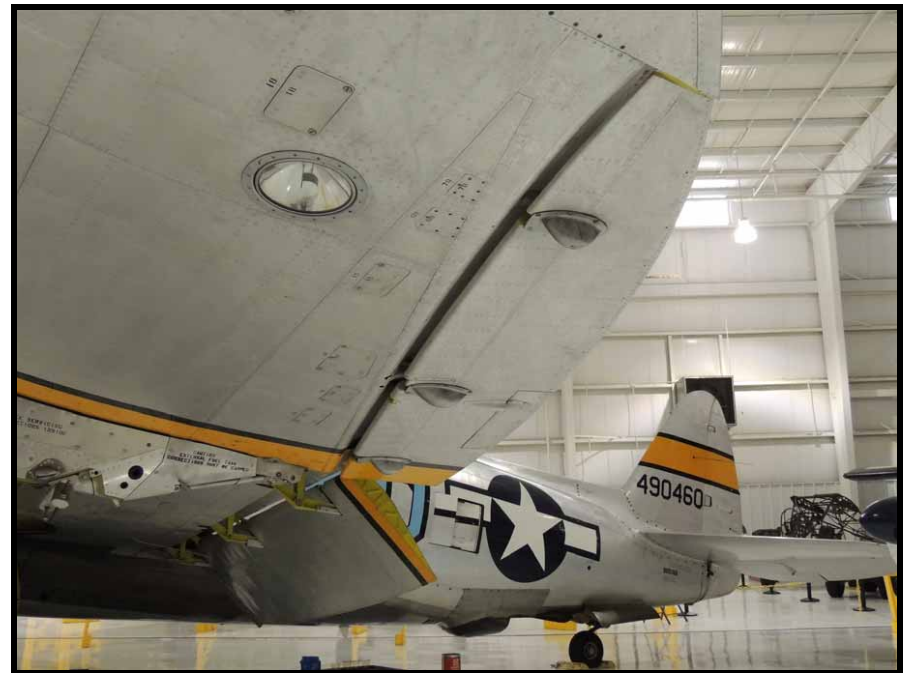
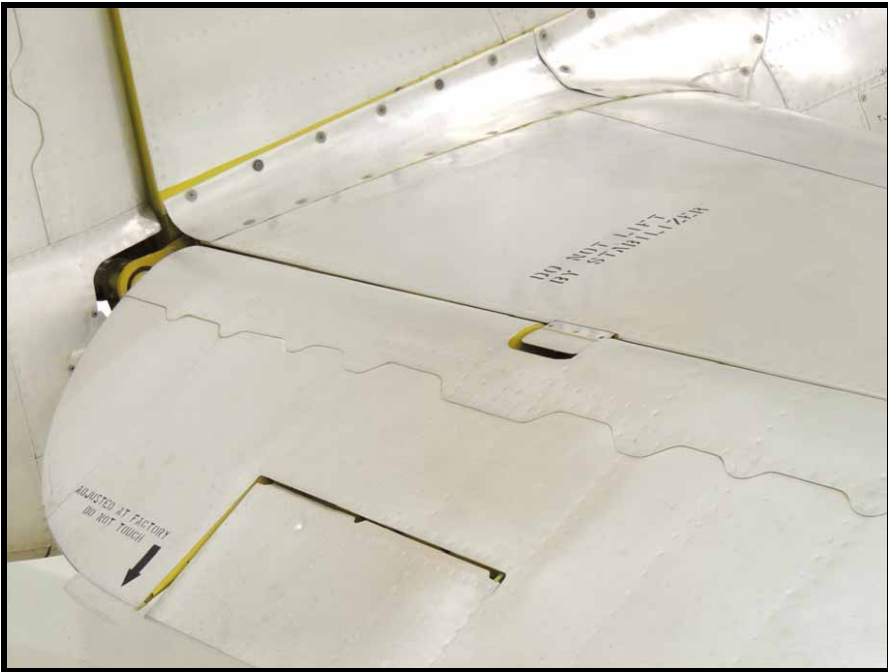


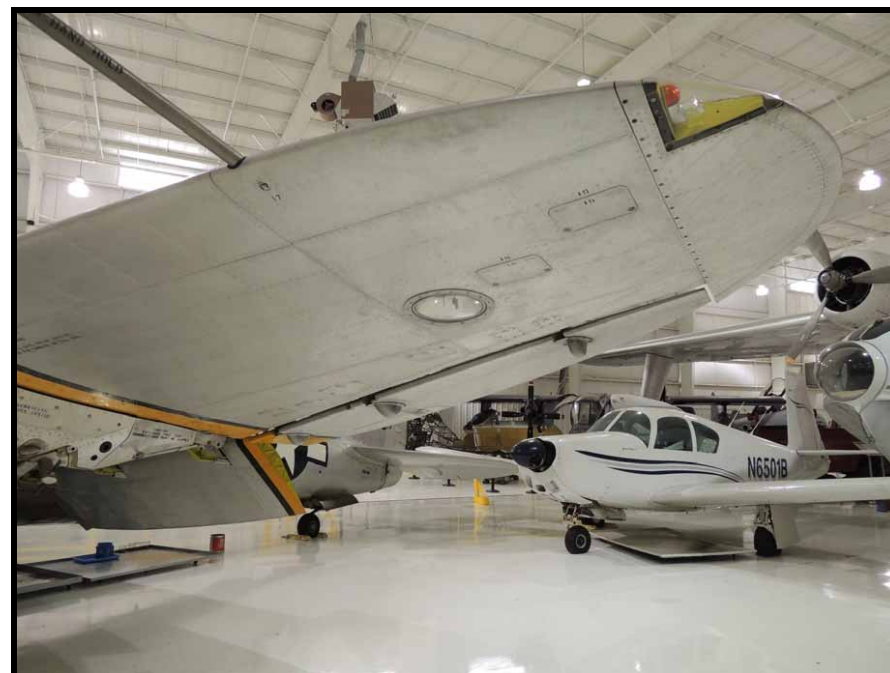
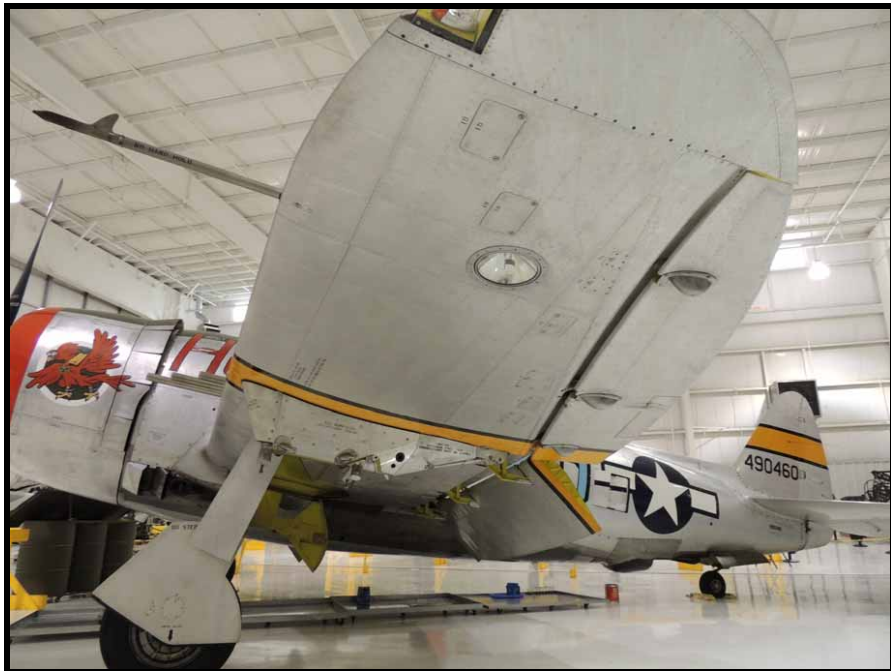






















The Thunderbolt at War

P-47s were flown in every theater of war except Alaska by the USAAF & several Allied nations. The Thunderbolt could absorb severe battle damage and keep flying. It could also out-dive any Luftwaffe plane it encountered.

Team Theater
Thunderbolt served as a high-altitude fighter into early 1944. Auxiliary fuel allowed it to escortAAF bombers to Germany than previous fighters.

Y'all cover for the D-Day
low-level fighter-bomber. Its 15,000 lb bombs or rocket load made it very effective ground support for the Allied advance.

Key missions against
the Pacific beginning in
1942. Long-range
120 bombers
inland in 1945.

This Aircraft P-47D-40RA Hun Hunter XVI

The aircraft on display:

- was manufactured at Republic Aviation's Evansville, Indiana facility in early 1945
 - served at various USAAF (USAF after 1948) bases from May, 1945 until September, 1953
 - transferred to the Brazilian Air Force under the Mutual Defense Assistance Plan, where it served until 1958
 - was placed on display at the gate of the Brazilian Air Force Base in Sao Paulo until 1987
 - was purchased and returned to the US in 1988
 - was purchased by Neal Melton in 1996 & restored by WestPac Aviation, Rialto, California
 - flew again for the first time in over 40 years on 3 August 1999
 - was flown back to Tennessee by Neal Melton in October, 1999
- Fewer than 10 P-47s are still flying regularly today. This is one of only 4 surviving P-47s with a functioning turbo-supercharger.
- The paint scheme is in tribute to Gil Wymond's Hun Hunter XIV of the 65th Fighter Squadron, World War II



Right: Hun Hunter XIV, pilot: Gil Wymond, European Theater, 1945
Below: Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert O. Wymond, 65th Fighter Squadron Commander, receives British Distinguished Flying Cross, 1945



The 65th Fighter Squadron

The 65th was one of three squadrons that comprised the 57th Fighter Group, one of the most amazing US fighter aircraft units of World War II. The 57th fought in nine major campaigns in Africa & Europe with the British (RAF) Desert Air Force, as well as the 9th & 12th US Army Air Forces. The unit was en route to the Pacific when Japan surrendered in August of 1945.

- Among its many accomplishments, the 57th:
- flew more combat missions than any other fighter group in World War II
 - were the 1st to fly land fighters off an aircraft carrier
 - were the 1st to operate in the European-North African-Middle Eastern Theater
 - were the 1st American unit to shoot down a German aircraft
 - had a higher kill-to-loss ratio than the "Flying Tigers"
 - were instrumental in adapting the P-47 to the ground attack role
 - received 3 Presidential Citations
 - received the Croix de Guerre with Palm from France

Left: Pilot Jack Gross with Rhode Island Red rooster "Uncle Bud II" - 65th Fighter Squadron mascot, Italy, 1945 ("Uncle Bud IV" currently resides at the Tennessee Museum of Aviation)

Right: 65th Fighter Squadron insignia drawn by cartoonist Milton Caniff, creator of classic comic strips "Terry and the Pirates" & "Steve Canyon"

