

FG-1D Corsair BuNo 92085 History & Restoration Overview

Steve Sibal
9-13-2024

Corsair -1D Model Description

The -1D model Corsair was an evolution of previous fighter models to create a fighter-bomber aircraft for the South Pacific as air-air combat decreased and island-hopping expanded

The -1D model was produced by three aircraft manufacturers to meet demand:

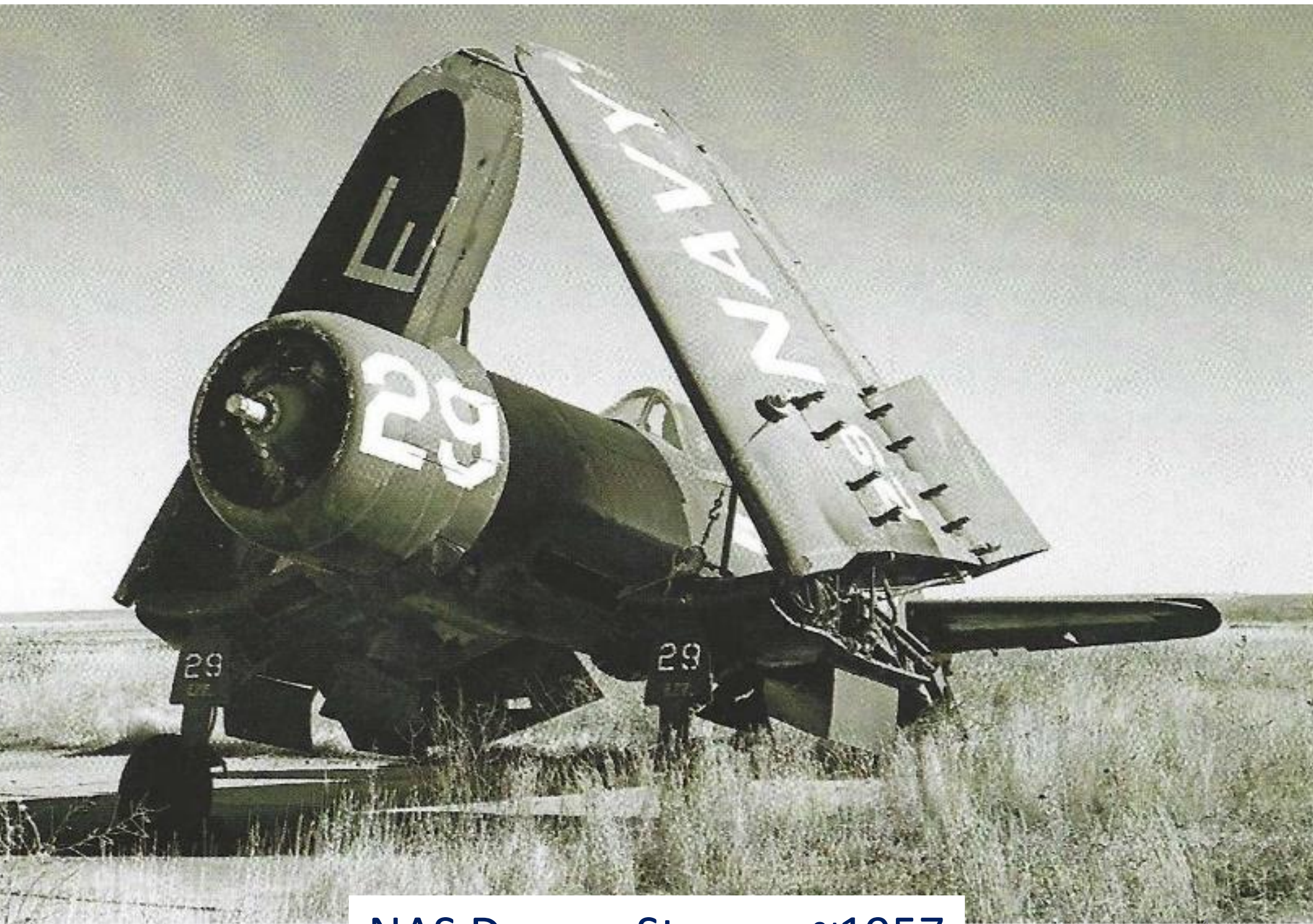
- F4U-1D by Vought-Sikorsky in Stratford, CT
- F3A-1D by Brewster in Warminster Twp., PA
- FG-1D by Goodyear Aircraft in Akron, OH 1,856 built

New features of the -1D model:

- One-piece frameless canopy bubble
- 2,250 HP R-2800-8W water-injected engine
- Hard points for fuel or ordinance under each IB wing
- Four 5" rockets under each OB wing
- Pilot's step built into right IB wing flap

BuNo 92085 Early Life

- 4-1945 Built by Goodyear in Akron, OH, accepted by Navy 5-1945
- 1945 San Diego, CA & Barbers Point, HI
- 1947 NART Columbus, OH & New York
- 1956 NAS Minneapolis & NAS Denver
- 2-1959 Antelope Park in Lincoln, NE wearing NAS Minneapolis markings
- 4-1972 In storage in Lincoln, NE
- 1976 Discovered by Brig. General Robert Raisch on gunnery range Yuma, AZ
- 9-1981 Custody was transferred to Selfridge Military Air Museum.
- 6-1984 1st restoration completed by Navy @ Selfridge
- 11-2014 2nd restoration begun by SMAM



NAS Denver Storage ~1957

Feb. 1959



Lincoln, NE Park Display 1959

May 1974

Richard Smith



In Storage at Lincoln, NE After Student Painting 1974

1978

Louis Nigro



Delivery From Yuma To Selfridge 1978

Louis Nigro



Restoration underway by U.S. Navy at Selfridge early 1980s



Air Park Display 2011-15
Marines #36 Grosse Ile
(One of Seven Known Air Park Markings)

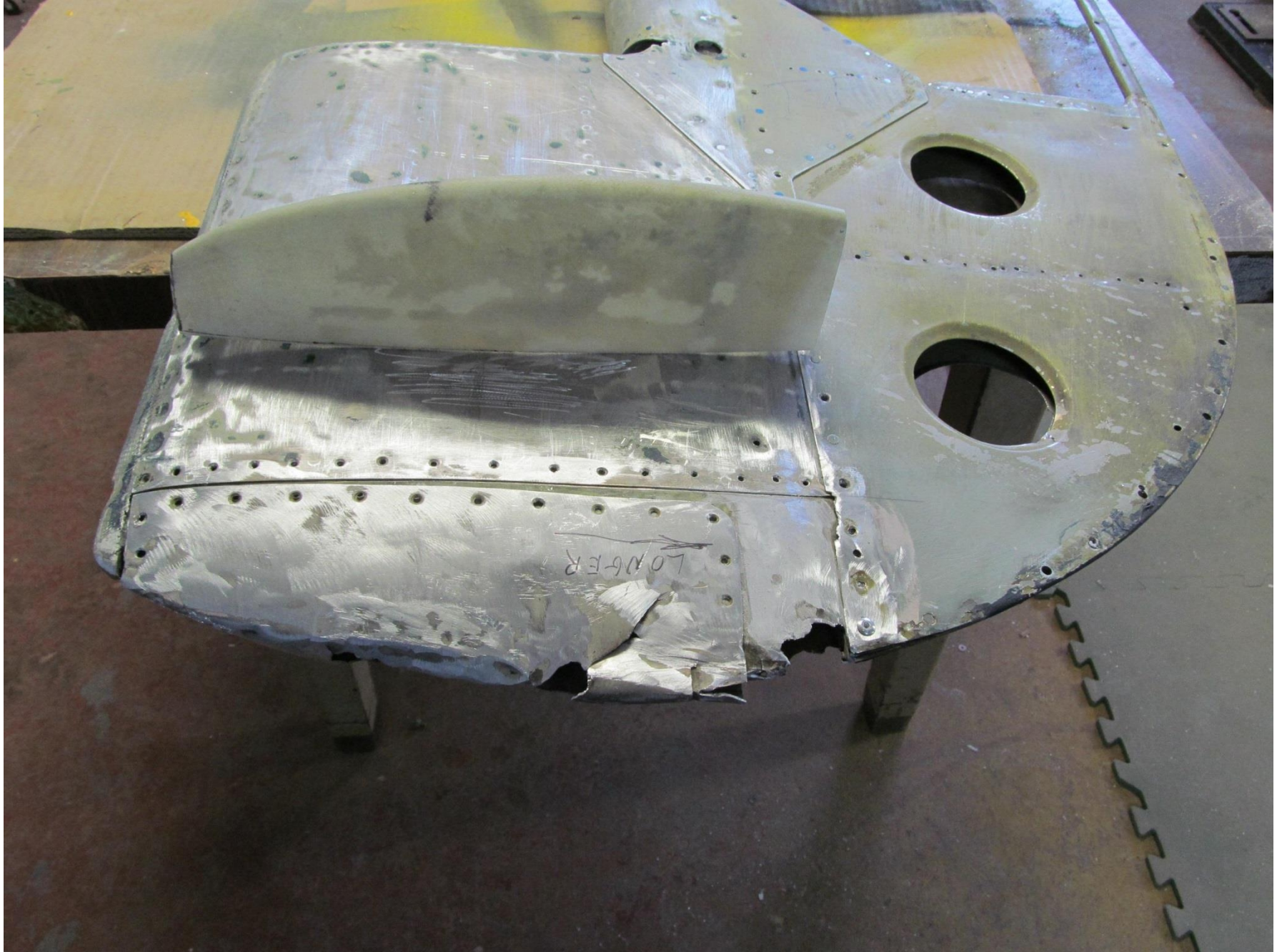
**2nd Restoration by SMAM
11-2014 thru 9-2024**



Corroded Wing Pins & Lugs November 2014¹¹



Tail Surface Restorations Begun Early 2015 ¹²



Elevator Tip Damage and New Fiberglass/Epoxy Replacement

Wing Pin & Outboard Wing Panel Removal



Wing Pin Removal w/ Rod & Sledge Hammer 2015



Fuselage Prior to Paint Stripping 2015



OB Wing Prior to Paint Stripping 2015



Machine Gun Bays Prior To Cleaning & Paint Stripping¹⁸



Left OB Wing “Aileron” Dissection



Building New Ailerons from Aluminum, Foam, Fiberglass & Epoxy

Exterior Paint Removal, Wing & Fuselage Repair



Airframe Paint Removal By Media Blasting 6-2015



After Paint Stripping



Right Fuselage Side “Bondo” Hole Patches



Hole In Bottom Of Left Stabilizer



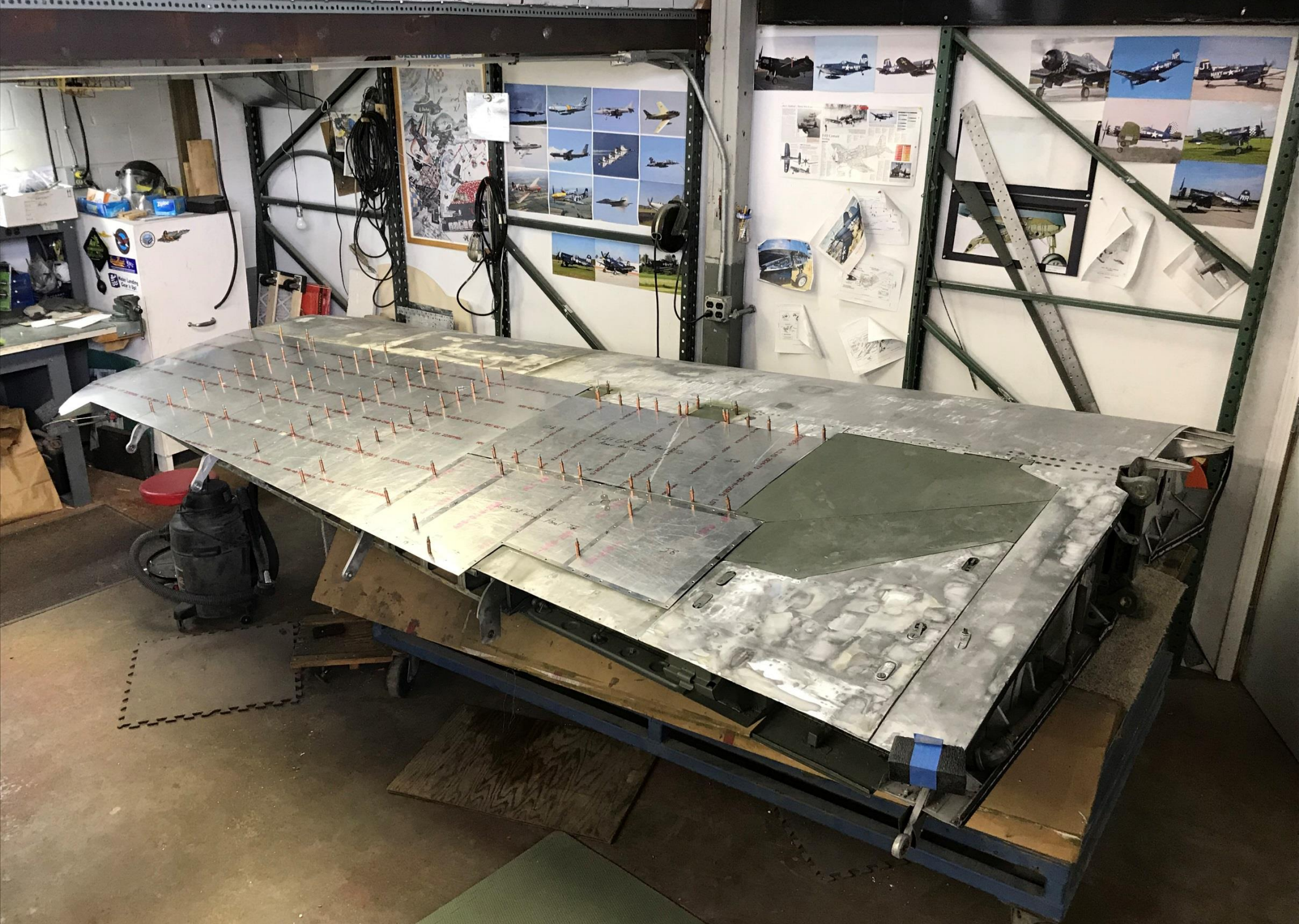
OB Wing Damage and Missing Tip After Paint Stripping³⁶



Building New Left Wing Tip From Fiberglass & Epoxy²⁷



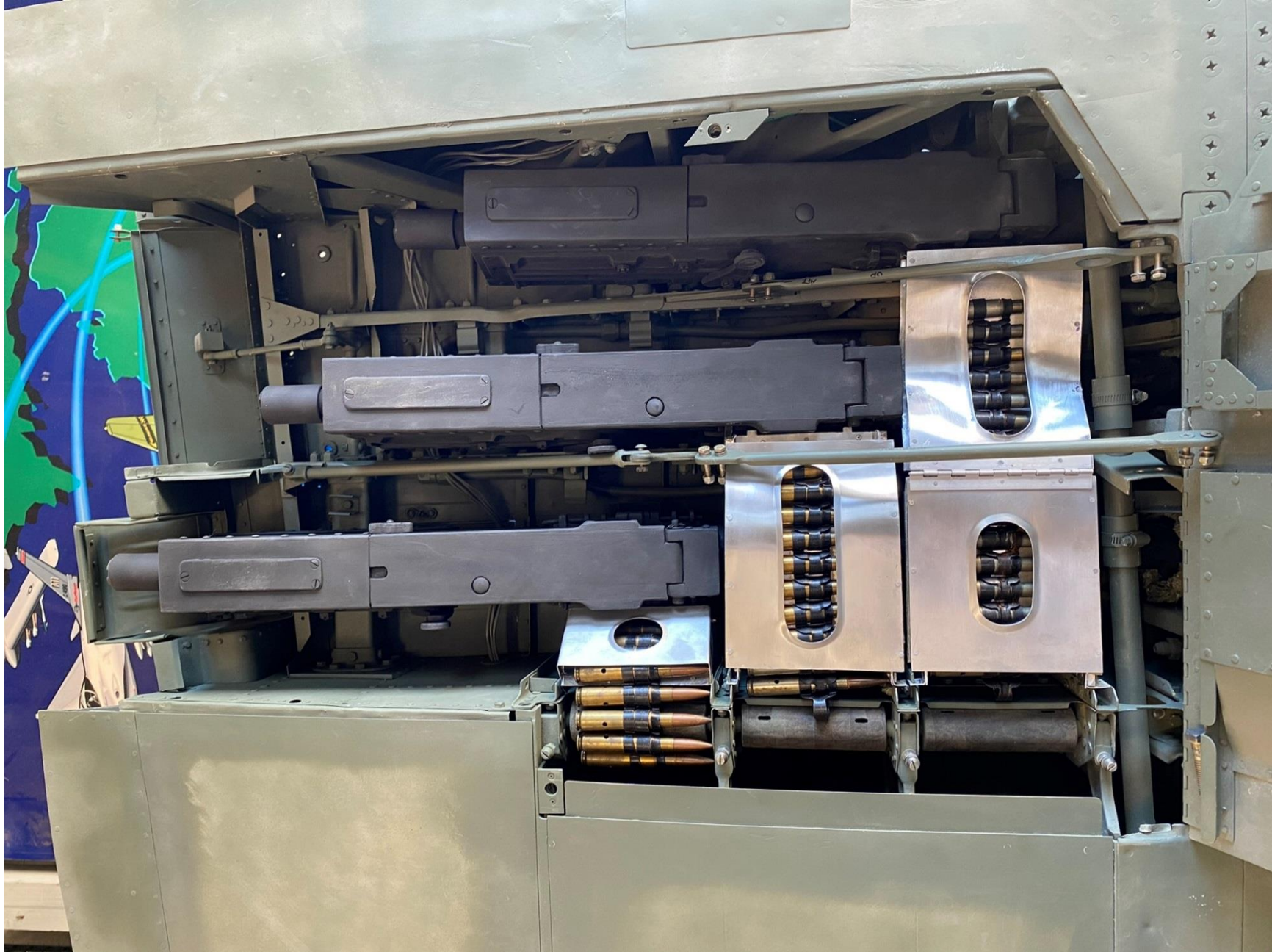
OB Wing Leading Edge Repairs Underway



OB Wing With New Skins & Repairs



Fuselage Bullet Hole & Damage Repair 2017 ⁰



Machine Gun Bays After Cleaning & Priming,
Replica Machine Guns & Ammo Troughs Added



Landing Gear & Wheel Manual Paint & Rust Stripping²³

Engine & Accessories Restoration



Engine Prior to Restoration



Three Stuck Pistons In Cylinders



Engine Disassembled to Crankshaft & Rods ³⁶



Engine Cylinders Before & After Media Blasting ³⁷



Engine Crankcase & Accessory Section
Media Blasted, Painted & Reassembled



**Engine Accessory Section:
Four of Eight Air Induction Ducts Missing**



New Engine Air Induction Ducts Fabricated

Cockpit Restoration



Cockpit Prior to Restoration



Repaired & Restored Instrument Panel



Canopy Bubble



Mk. 8 Gunsight



Pilot's Headrest



Pilot's Heel Rests



Pilot's Seat



Gun & Bomb
Selector Switch Boxes

Some of the New Cockpit Components Fabricated

3D Printing of Missing Parts



Rudder/Brake Pedal



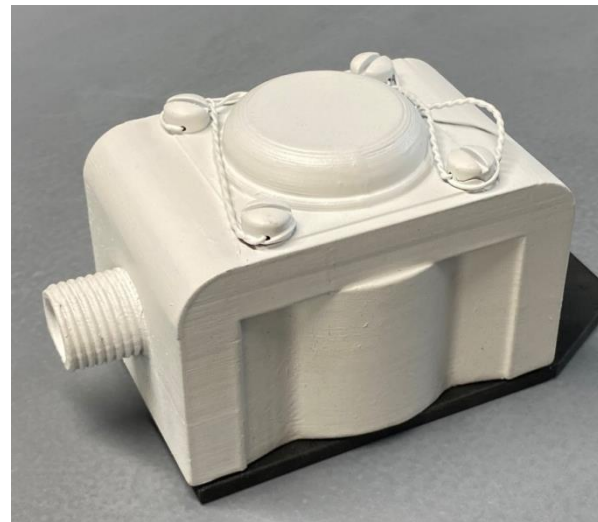
Landing Gear Door
Hydraulic Cylinders



Prop Pitch
Governor



Centerline Fuel Tank
Control Lever



Machine Gun
Firing Solenoids



Wheel Hub Caps

Some of the 3D Printed Components Fabricated

Aircraft Markings & Painting

Markings For Restoration of #92085

The Museum wanted to make the markings of #92085 representative of its Marine Corps heritage and the contributions of SE Michigan in WWII

No Corsairs were based at Selfridge

Marine squadron VMF-251 was based at NAS Grosse Ile 1946-1950 as a Reserve Squadron, however Navy Corsairs were used. No Marine Corsairs were allocated

From Steven Dixon's book of VMF-251 in the South Pacific during WWII, a photo shows a Marine -1D Corsair being flown by Lt. Whisenhant

#92085 was never based at Selfridge or NAS Grosse Ile

It was decided to make the markings of #92085 represent Lt. Whisenhant's Corsair

From the book "Photo Recon Became Fighter Duty" by Steven K. Dixon



Whisenant in his Corsair somewhere over the Philippines, 1945 with Lucifer's Messengers on nose.



**Bullet Holes and Damage Repaired,
Fuselage Smoothed & Primed Prior to Painting**



Yellow Zinc Chromate & Glossy Sea Blue Painting



Stencil Application for National Insignia Painting



Buffing Clearcoat

Our Sponsors/Donors

Roush Industries	Canopy bubble
Prop Art Studio	3 replica Browning machine guns
Supreme Media Blasting	Engine cylinders & engine mount cleaning
RCI Tooling	Production representative wing jury strut
127 th Wing	Fasteners, use of large sheet metal shear, use of small paint booth
Unknown Visitor	Stainless steel wing pins & bronze bushings

Corsair Restoration Volunteer Support

Typically 5-6 volunteers/day working Tuesdays and Fridays since early 2015

Saturday Crew of 2-4 volunteers started 2021

Approximately 48 total Museum volunteers:

- 32 volunteers from the Restoration Team
- 14 volunteers from Air Park, Maintenance & Grounds Teams

Approximately 20,000 man-hours expended thru end of 2020

Estimated 35,000 man-hours total thru the end of 2024

In Summary

Many aircraft components were missing or brutally damaged prior to the start of our work

Many unknown restoration challenges surfaced after paint stripping

Many skills were required, learned and used to create 100s of damaged or missing parts:

- Sheet metal forming and riveting
- Fiberglass/epoxy/foam parts creation
- Scaling photographs to create full-size part dimensions
- Finding part #s and drawings using manuals & AirCorps Library
- Welding aluminum
- Sewing and upholstery
- Sand casting aluminum parts
- Lathe-turned wood
- 3D printing
- Painting using water-based formulas

In Summary (Cont.)

Our sponsors/donors created many major components we did not have the capability to produce

Many volunteers completed work at home to repair or create parts

Invaluable contributions from other Museum teams for stenciling & graphics, electrical wiring and heavy lift assembly

A GREAT team effort by the Museum staff !

Our Corsair Restoration Volunteers

Restoration Team

Jerry Bryce
Fred Durr
Darrell Rohrbeck
Russ Valeri
Vince Giacobbe
Jack Tyson
Zoie (mascot)
Steve Sibal
“Ducky”
Joe Stank
Jerry Zinger
Ray Milio
Ed Cuneo
Harold Tiburzi
Gary Orban
Fred Joyner

Ron Lendon
Bill Andrew
Evan Wieczorek
Jim Galvin
Paul Werner
Fred Lobeck
Ron McDuffie
Ron Powers
John Slocum
Dennis Kenward
Dave Trojan
Dave Nellis
George Futiak
Paul Kaiser
Richard Evans
Dan Vernier

Other Museum Teams

Bob Hudson
Ray Carpenter
Dave Leasia
Frank Guastella
Mark Sibula
Tom Craft
Dennis Stricklin
Brian Charron
Jim Ashford
Tony Junga
Gerry Ridener
Bill Fields
Dee Ridener
Sharron Butala