



Summer 2021

SHILLELAGH

Wings of the North Museum's P-51B Project
by Chuck Cravens



AIRCORPS AVIATION



P-51B-10NA
42-106602 Shillelagh

WINGS of the NORTH



www.wotn.org



Wings of the North's exciting latest restoration project honors Kenneth Dahlberg, David O'Hara and all the men of the 354th Pioneer Mustang Group.



Kenneth Dahlberg



David O'Hara

Both men flew the P-51B-10NA Mustang, Shillelagh, as did other members of the 353rd Fighter Squadron. Ken Dahlberg was shot down in this airplane, and escaped capture to return to his squadron. Shillelagh had been assigned to David O'Hara, and was the third Mustang assigned to him that was lost when another pilot was flying it. Shillelagh completed 95 missions over enemy territory, including on D-Day before the loss of the P-51 on August 16, 1944, when Ken Dahlberg was shot down while flying O'Hara's P-51.

As the restoration proceeds, we will tell Ken and David's story, and that of Shillelagh.



Data Sheet: P-51B-10NA 42-106602



Early nose art, profile art by Gaetan Marie

P-51B-10NA Specifications:

Engine	Packard Merlin V-1650-7, twelve cylinder Vee liquid cooled engine, 1695 hp
Maximum Speed	395 mph at 5,000 feet, 417 mph at 10,000 feet, 426 mph at 20,000 feet, 439 mph at 25,000 feet, 435 mph at 30,000 feet
Range on internal fuel:	955 miles at 397 mph (at 25,000 feet), 1,300 miles at 260 mph (at 10,000 feet)
Max. Range w/ external fuel:	2,440 miles at 249 mph.
Climb Performance:	5,000 feet in 1.6 minutes, 10,000 feet in 3.1 minutes, 20,000 feet in 6.9 minutes
Service ceiling:	41,900 feet
Weights:	6,985 lbs empty, 9,800 lbs normal loaded, 11,800 lbs maximum loaded
Wingspan:	37 feet 0 1/4 inches
Length:	32 feet 3 inches
Height:	8 feet 8 inches
Wing area:	233 square feet



42-106602 Individual Aircraft History Card (IARC) Entries

Contract Number: AC-30479

NAA Construction Number: 104-22989

Project number: 9054

Factory Location: Inglewood, CA.

Army Air Force Serial Number: 42-106602

Production group: 42-106602 was part of a production group of 398 P-51B-10NAs that included 43-7113-7202, 42-106429 through 106538, and the subgroup of 198 that included this aircraft, 42-106541 through 42-106738

Acceptance Date: 31-January-1944

- It was the 1,212th P-51B built.
- Available 6-February-1944 after 85 gallon fuselage fuel tank installed (note this IARC entry is a little strange because most sources indicate that the 85 gallon fuselage fuel tank was installed starting with P-51B-5NAs. What appears to be the case is that the tanks were not yet being installed on the assembly line at Inglewood, but rather retro-fitted at modification centers (including at the modification center at the Inglewood factory). This was common as changes were implemented to assembly lines in order to not slow production.
- Delivered 2-7-1944 to Air Transport Command for ferrying
- Flown out to Long Beach where it was delayed due to weather until departing Long beach on 2-9-1944
- Arrived Palm Springs 2-9-1944
- Arrived Dallas 2-10-1944 and remained over night
- Arrived Monroe, LA 2-11-1944 grounded until 2-20-1944 The grounding is unexplained on the IARC but was likely a maintenance squawk. Continued delivery to Newark, NJ was approved on 2-24-1944
- Arrived Memphis, TN 2-29-1944
- Arrived Newark, NJ 3-1-1944
- Departed continental United States 3-9-1944
- Destination code indicated 8th Air Force, England.(SOXO)
- Arrived in England 3-22-1844
- Assigned to 9th Air Force 4-13-1944



Combat Markings

- 9th AF, 354th FG, 353rd Squadron
- F TP squadron markings
- Invasion stripes until ordered removed from upper surfaces, then only lower half of fuselage and under wing stripes remained
- A figure of a horse rearing up was painted on the tail



Ken Dahlberg on the wing of Shillelaugh in the earlier nose art scheme and spelling.

The nose art was originally a club like Shillelagh, but spelled Shillelaugh. Over the night of June 5, 1944, full D-Day invasion stripes were applied.

SHILLELAUGH



Later nose art, profile art by Gaetan Marie

At the time that the invasion stripes were ordered removed from the upper surfaces and top half of the fuselage, the Mustang likely received a “freshening up” of the paint scheme. The nose art was now spelled Shillelagh, with a spiked club painted forward of the name.

The assigned pilot was 1st Lt David B O’Hara, O-744743. O’Hara flew a total of 84 combat missions from 20 December 1943 to 8 September 1944 with 48 of those missions being flown in 42-106602, FT-P. During O’Hara’s combat time he had a confirmed air to air victory on April 8, 1944.¹



First Combat Mission: 15 April 1944

42-106602 flew its first combat mission on 15 April 1944.

Other notable events were:

- 25 April 1944 Encounter Report and Early Return with coolant problems
- 30 April 1944 Battle Damage due to flak
- 2 May 1944 Encounter Report (with another pilot) and Early Return due to rough engine
- 8 May 1944 Early Return due to coolant problems

¹ USAF Historical Study No. 85, USAF Credits for the Destruction of Enemy Aircraft, Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center, Air University, 1978, page 249



- 11 May 1944 Encounter Report (with another pilot)
- 30 May 1944 Encounter Report (with another pilot) and Early Return due to Oxygen troubles
- 6 June 1944 Forced Landing at Stony Cross (Sta 254)
- 14 June 1944 Encounter Report (with another pilot)
- 17 June 1944 Encounter Report (with another pilot)
- 21 June 1944 DNTD (did not take off due to unknown mechanical problems)
- 25 July 1944 Encounter Report with O'Hara for ground claims
- 1 August 1944 Encounter Report (with another pilot)
- 16 August 1944 Encounter Report (with another pilot) Kenneth H Dahlberg/FRA
- **Lost:** 16 August 1944 with Kenneth H Dahlberg who bailed out and evaded capture in France. Ken returned to 354th FG on 27 August 1944. No official Escape & Evasion Report, German J Report, or Missing Air Crew Report filed, meaning that the pilot did report back within 48 hours of being shot down and most likely being within territory that the German's would not have undertaken salvage operations.
- 17 August 1944 listed as MIA on the Individual Aircraft Record card
- Recorded as missing in action 17 August, 1944
- Removed from AAF inventory 15 September, 1944

42-106602 flew a total of 95 combat missions. During the time period between 15 April, 1944 and 16 August, 1944, when Shillelagh was flying; O'Hara flew a 56 combat missions of which 48 were in 42-106602, FT-P.



9th Air Force Emblem



354th Fighter Group Emblem



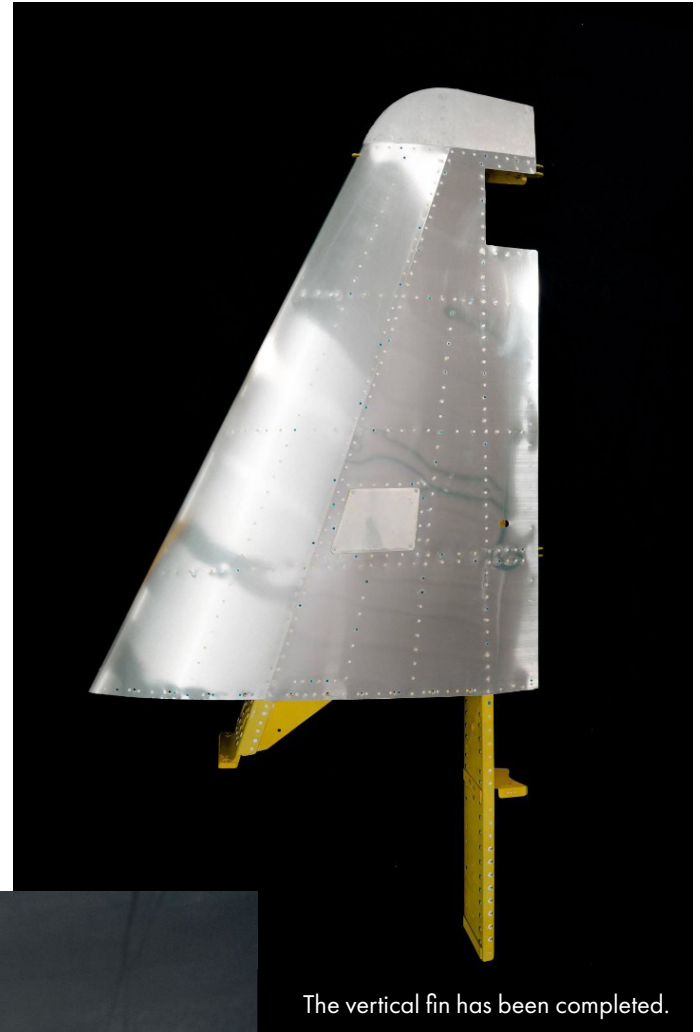
353rd Fighter Squadron Emblem



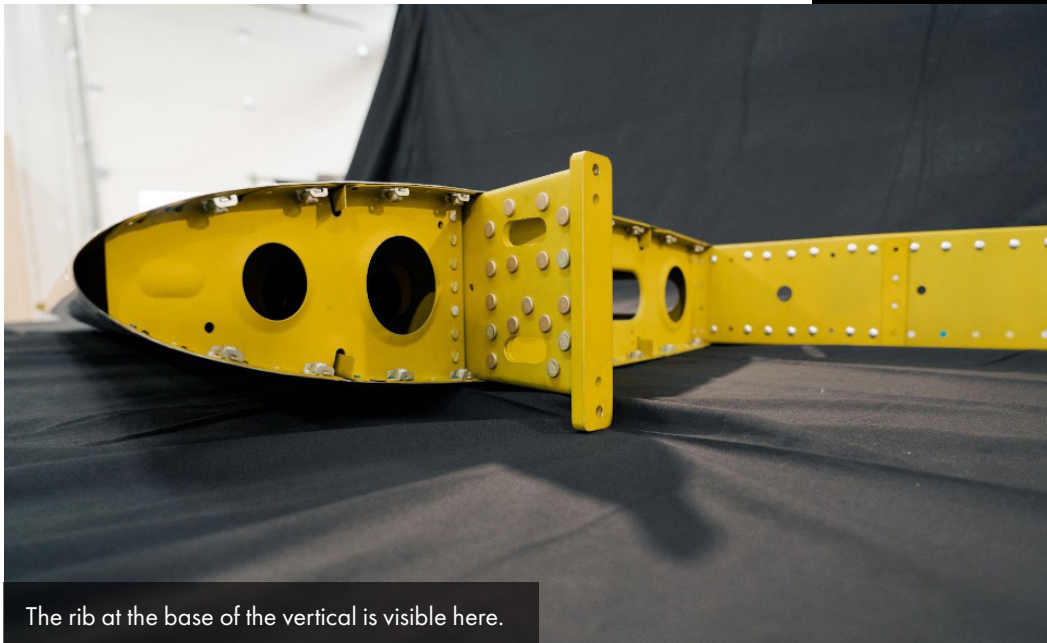
Restoration Begins

Wings of the North Museum has chosen AirCorps Aviation to restore Shillelagh. The first steps in restoration are to evaluate what is on hand and begin making parts that are not.

The first assembly to be completed for this Mustang is the empennage.



The vertical fin has been completed.



The rib at the base of the vertical is visible here.



Neil is working on the Shillelagh horizontal stabilizer.



Richard works on Shillelagh's elevator.



Here, Richard works on the rudder for Shillelagh.



This is the area of the under fuselage scoop that houses the exit door for the cooling air.



The rudder framework is nearly complete.



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AIREXPO IS A GO! — JULY 24TH & 25TH



Wings of the North Air Museum's **AirExpo 2021**

See aviation history and the completed warbird restorations fly at Flying Cloud Field on July 24th and 25th as AirExpo returns after the national shut down of 2020!

Details and updates available at the Wings of the North FaceBook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/WingsOfTheNorth>

Or on their website: <http://www.wotn.org/>

It will be a great airshow and proceeds will help Wings of the North Museum continue their fine work preserving history, honoring our vets, and flying their amazing collection of warbirds.

WIN BIG, ENTER NOW!

