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T-6 Harvard Mk.IV. N542PJ

For someone looking to acquire a pristine, fully-restored, combat veteran T-6/Harvard, it is hard to imagine a better example anywhere in the world.



Serial Number: CCF-F-542
Mfg: Canadian Car & Foundry Co LTD.
Date of MFG: 1953
AW: Valid Exhibition
Engine: P & W R-1340-AN-1

The aircraft has a remarkable service history, and has recently completed a complete, ground-up restoration to factory-fresh condition... something rarely afforded a two-seat trainer.

The U.S. Air Force ordered this Harvard, as part of a production batch of 285 examples manufactured by Canadian Car & Foundry (CCF) at their plant in Fort William, Ontario. CCF built these Harvards to U.S. Air Force specifications comparable to the North American T-6G Texan, but designated them as T-6Js for export to NATO countries under the Mutual Assistance Program.



This is a sister-ship to the subject aircraft, built under the same contract by Canadian Car & Foundry as CCF-4-438... just four airframes up from '542 on the production line at Fort William, Ontario. Much like '542, she received a USAF serial number (53-4619), served in the nascent West German Luftwaffe (as AA+050), and was transferred to the Portuguese Air Force (as 1747). This Harvard is painted in the markings she wore while in Portuguese service, so it is likely that '542 looked similarly to this during her time with the PAF too. (photo by Alan Wilson via Wikipedia)

Canadian Car & Foundry completed the aircraft in 1953 with construction number CCF-4-542. Shortly afterwards, US-affiliated production test pilots checked and accepted the Harvard, and assigned her the USAF serial number 53-4623. The newly-formed West German Luftwaffe was the initial operator, taking delivery of the Harvard as AA+682. She trained young German pilots until 1955, whereupon the Germans exported the aircraft along with several other examples to the Portuguese Air Force, where the well-traveled trainer received the serial 1781.

By the 1960s, the Portuguese were vigorously fending off independence movements in their African colonies of Angola and Mozambique, territories they had held for four centuries. A violent insurrection erupted in Mozambique in September, 1964, and Portugal sent some of their Harvards, re-equipped for ground attack and close-air support, as part of a military response. Our subject aircraft was involved in this campaign; a campaign which after a decade of conflict resulted in a ceasefire in September, 1974, and a negotiated Portuguese withdrawal the following year. The Portuguese abandoned '542 in Mozambique when they left the newly-minted, independent nation. The combat veteran aircraft eventually went on static display as a war trophy in the capitol city of Maputo. It remained there until the late 1980's when the South African government purchased it, along with a good number of other ex-Mozambique Air Force T-6s/Harvards to supplement that nation's fleet, which was then under a military equipment embargo from most western-aligned nations due to South Africa's apartheid policies then in place.

The South African Air Force did not return the Harvard back to operating condition by the time that they retired their fleet in 1995. They sold the surviving airframes on to civilians, with '542 going

initially to a new owner in New Zealand. However, the Harvard soon traveled to Australia, where Rob Greinert applied his prodigious skills to the airframe's renewal at the **Historical Aircraft Restoration Society's** facility in Albion Park, New South Wales. Greinert first drew up a comprehensive restoration plan, which began with the aircraft's complete disassembly. Each component was inspected, with unserviceable items being repaired, and all life-limited parts replaced with either new old stock or freshly overhauled units. The airframe was restored in a jig to as-new condition, which included re-skinning the wings and fuselage. The engine and propeller were zero-timed before refitting. All of the hoses, cabling and wiring harnesses were replaced. The canopy was rebuilt, with all-new plexiglas, and the cockpits restored to stock condition, albeit with a few additions to comply with modern safety standards. The aircraft was nearing completion in early 2018 and was transport and shipped to the USA for final restoration and certification.



CCF-4-542 sitting in the hangar, complete with her original West German Luftwaffe livery.

The aircraft returned to the air for the first time in five decades in July 2019, immediately becoming one of the nicest and best restored T-6/Harvards currently flying. She is marked in her original West German

Luftwaffe livery, with authentic placarding and stenciling throughout. The aircraft is currently on the U.S. civil registry as N542PJ.

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