

## North American SNJ-4 Texan

1943

### About This Aircraft

This SNJ-4 was one of 2,401 built by North American in Dallas, Texas, as part of military contract DA-8. Assigned serial number 88-13466 and Navy bureau number 27780, the SNJ-4 made a wartime career of training Navy pilots. Accepted into the Navy on May 11, 1943, the trainer served until it was stricken from Navy inventory in 1956. Upon its retirement, this airplane was sold to Ace Smelting Company on December 27, 1956, and it appeared its days were numbered.

Five months later, the plane was somehow saved. After 5,182.3 hours of Navy flight time, this SNJ-4 was sold to a private individual in May of 1957. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, the plane operated on the East Coast, mostly near New York.

During the mid-1960s, the airframe was reportedly altered for “weather modification” flights. Weather modification flights were sometimes performed to clear foggy runways at airports for passenger arrivals. This was achieved by dropping dry ice pellets that froze the water droplets, making them heavy enough to fall to the ground.

Sold again and restored to its original configuration, the SNJ-4 passed through numerous owners before coming to Evergreen in March 1986.



### General History

#### Pilot Maker

Called “the most universally used airplane in history,” the *Texan* trainer rivals the famed DC-3 in longevity and variety of uses. Originating from the 1935 open-cockpit, fixed-gear NA-16, the *Texan* was employed as an advanced trainer, designated as the U.S. Army’s AT-6 and the U.S. Navy’s SNJ. When student pilots graduated from slow and basic primary trainers such as Stearmans, they used AT-6s and SNJs to master flight in a bigger, faster, more complex aircraft before entering combat in ultra-high performance *Mustangs* and *Corsairs*.

These trainers weren’t just used in the U.S. but flew in many nations including Canada, Britain, and Australia. One gun-equipped Australian *Texan* even surprised a formidable Japanese *Zero* and shot it down.

After the war, the planes continued in U.S. military service and flew with at least 55 nations in the role of trainer, fighter, bomber, attack, transport and observation aircraft. Today, nearly 400 of the more than 17,000 *Texans* of all types produced are still registered in the U.S.

#### A *Texan* by Any Other Name...

The *Texan* earned its name in honor of where most of the planes were built, at the new North American factory in Dallas, Texas. But *Texan* isn’t the plane’s only name. For every new nation and every new use the plane seemed to gain another name. British versions are *Harvards*, French versions are *Tomcats* and Canadian versions are *Yales*. To the Australians, it was *Wirraway*, a native word for “challenge.” In the Korean War, the U.S. target-spotting *Texans* were known as *Mosquitoes* or LT-6Gs. In Spain, Portugal, France and Brazil, they were called FT-6Gs.

*Texans* went everywhere and seem to have done it all. Even the Yemani Air Force had two and the Southern Rhodesian Air Force acquired eleven of these versatile craft.

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### Specifications

Type:	Military Trainer Aircraft
First Flight:	NA-16 on April 1, 1935
Wingspan:	42 feet
Length:	29 feet
Height:	11 feet 9 inches
Wing Area:	254 square feet
Weight, Empty:	4,158 pounds
Weight, Loaded:	5,300 pounds
Power:	One Pratt & Whitney R-1340, 550 horsepower engine
Normal Crew:	Two
Typical Armament:	None

### Performance

Cruise Speed:	170 miles per hour at 5,000 feet
Top Speed:	205 miles per hour at 5,000 feet
Range:	750 miles
Service Ceiling:	21,500 feet