



USAAF 451228
EC on fuselage
493 on nose

USAAF 44-51228

Consolidated (Ford, Dearborn-built) B-24M-20-FO c/n 6083

The last USAF Liberator, a Ford-built B-24M-20-FO serial number 44-51228 was assigned to the Wright Aeronautical Development Center for ice research. (Fin carried WADC titles) It was stripped of armament, and nose and tail gunner positions were faired over. Redesignated as EZB-24M. The words ICE RESEARCH were painted in big letters on the fuselage plus Buzz No: BC-228. A variety of probes were tested to study the effects of icing and to explore methods for deicing. This plane was later modified by the Aeronautical Research Laboratory to test the deicing capabilities of the Boeing B-47 Stratojet wing. After retirement from USAF service in 1953 it moved to Lackland AFB Museum in Texas in 1956, but was exhibited in the open. When the IWM wanted a representative B-24 for the American Air Museum, it was acquired as a donation from the Ford Motor Company via a series of other aircraft exchanges, including a genuine Spitfire and a replica going to US Museums. After arrival by airfreight into RAF Mildenhall (aboard C-5A 68-0215), it was roaded to Duxford in two shipments (03.06 & 29.06.99). Various parts (including turrets) that had been removed during modification for the AIRL were re-sourced and it was reassembled and repainted as 44-50492, a B-24M that was assigned to the 392nd Bombardment Group, 578th Bombardment Squadron.