



KEEPING THE FORTS FLYING

IN AN EFFORT OF HISTORIC PROPORTIONS, THE WARBIRD SHOP HAS DEVELOPED A METHOD TO REPLACE THE WING SPARS OF THE BOEING B-17 FLYING FORTRESS. THIS WILL ALLOW SEVERAL FORTS TO RETURN TO AIRWORTHY STATUS AFTER INSPECTION REVEALED POTENTIALLY DEADLY SPAR CRACKING

BY SCOTT THOMPSON

One of the most popular operational Forts was the EAA's *Aluminum Overcast* but the aircraft received storm damage in 2021 while on tour in Florida. Inspection also revealed that the wing had moved 2-inches and this could have possibly led to a catastrophic failure. The EAA disassembled the aircraft and moved it back to its Oshkosh headquarters where restoration and repair work is being undertaken. Pioneering work undertaken by The Warbird Shop means that organizations can now purchase new spars to keep their B-17s flying for decades to come. (EAA/Jlm Koepnick)