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## American Aero Services restores WWII aircraft, preserves history



A North American TF-51D Mustang restored for the Collings Foundation by American Aero Services in New Smyrna Beach.

**New Smyrna Beach, FL** - It has been said that if you have a job you love, you'll never work a day in your life. Gary Norville couldn't agree more. As the owner of American Aero Services, Norville's days are consumed by the exacting (and fascinating) work of restoring of World War II vintage aircraft.

American Aero Services is a restoration and maintenance facility serving the Warbird community and other collectors. It was founded by George Baker in 1981. Norville took over in 1998 and moved the company from its South Street location in New Smyrna Beach to a larger location at New Smyrna Beach Municipal Airport. The company has won several awards for its work and employs 22 people, including several Federal Aviation Administration licensed airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanics.

In addition to restoration of aircraft, military vehicles, armor, missiles and rockets, the company maintains selected aircraft, vehicles and spacecraft. American Aero Services also offers machine shop services, including HAAS CNC capabilities, lathe and millwork, structural sheet metal

work, welding, reverse-engineering, repair work and more.

"I consider myself fortunate that my work involves aviation and history," said Norville. "It's art. It's science. These aircraft are more than artifacts. They are living symbols of American freedom and the hopes and dreams of our WWII allies."

American Aero Services has customers throughout the country, including the Collings Foundation in Stow, Massachusetts. The foundation organizes and supports living history events and the preservation, exhibition and interaction of historical artifacts that enable Americans to learn more about their heritage through direct participation. American Aero is honored to maintain their aircraft.

Among American Aero's substantial portfolio of numerous projects is the "Shady Lady," a B-17G Flying Fortress. It is a four-engine heavy bomber workhorse of WWII. Other restorations include a P-40B Tomahawk, PB5A Catalina, Stinson L-1 Vigilant, F6F-3 Hellcat, FW-190 White One, A-36 Apache, P-51 Mustang and others.

The company also maintains a small museum at 1501 Airway Circle at New Smyrna Beach Municipal Airport. The museum has a vast array of artifacts on display and is open weekdays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Watch the feature video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7unY7ondEu0>) on American Aero Services produced by the county's Community Information division.