



WORKSHOP

SNOW GOOSE



Replacing the corroded skin on the lower hull necessitated the fuselage being turned 90° sideways. In late November 2023, it was turned upright once again. VILLY KARLSSON

The Flygvapenmuseum is re-creating the only Grumman Goose to see Swedish Air Force service — and both that airframe and this one have fascinating stories behind them **WORDS: JAN FORSGREN**

Although only 345 Grumman Goose amphibians were completed, the type has enjoyed an enduring legacy. Indeed, a few are still working for a living. Apart from seeing large-scale use in the US Navy, 50 were supplied as part of the Lend-Lease agreement to the Fleet Air Arm, with others seeing service with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Post-war, many continued in civilian hands, and some were flown by various air arms.

Only one Goose served with the Flygvapnet (Swedish Air Force), between 1951 and 1962. Built in 1942, this particular machine (c/n 1134) was one of 50 JRF-6Bs which went to the Fleet Air Arm under Lend-Lease.

Allotted the serial number FP484 — a previous allocation, BW787 remained unfulfilled — and the designation Goose Ia, the amphibian was based at Piarco, Trinidad, from 1942-45. It was returned to US Navy charge

being registered LN-SAB on 14 October 1947 for Thor Solberg Flyveselskab. Based at Bergen, it was named *Liev Eiriksson II* in honour of the Viking explorer. This career was quite short-lived, for during 1951 LN-SAB was sold

designation Tp 81 and serial number 81001, the aeroplane was transferred to F 21 at Luleå-Kallax in north-eastern Sweden, arriving there on 3 November 1951.

Accepted for service six days later, the Tp 81 became a welcome sight with isolated communities in the far north. Skis from a B 5 (Northrop 8A-1) light bomber were fitted during the harsh winters. Aerial ambulance services in the sparsely populated northern regions — the land area covered by F 21 was a quarter of Sweden's total, equivalent to Scotland — had been established in 1923 by the Swedish Red Cross. By using aircraft, a patient could be collected and transported to

“Two Skyraiders were traded in exchange for a Goose”

following the end of the war as BuNo 66340, and on 12 May 1947 was registered as NC9293H for the Thor Solberg Aviation Co at Whitehouse, New Jersey.

A few months later, the Goose crossed the Atlantic,

to the Flygvapnet for conversion into an air ambulance. Its acquisition was due to the Beech 18R (Tp 4) previously used in this role being temporarily assigned to an Anglo-Swedish Antarctic expedition. Given the