

**INDIVIDUAL HISTORY**

**SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE L.F.XVIE RW393/7293M**  
**MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER 1995/1012/A**

- 20 Jan 44 Ordered as one of 700 Spitfire Mk.21 aircraft, cancelled in August 1944 but partially re-instated as 40 Mk XVI aircraft. Built at Castle Bromwich. Serial block RW373 - 396.
- 20 Jul 45 To No.6 Maintenance Unit, RAF Brize Norton, Oxon.
- 3 Nov 47 To the Spitfire L.F.XVI equipped No.203 Advanced Flying School at RAF Chivenor, Devon.
- 22 Jan 48 To Fighter Command Control and Reporting School, RAF Middle Wallop, Hants. This unit used Spitfire L.F.XVI and Airspeed Oxford aircraft to train fighter controllers.
- 49 Flown as the personal aircraft of the AOC Fighter Command - Air Marshal Sir William Elliot (AOC Fighter Command 1947 -49) whilst on charge to No.31 Squadron (Metropolitan Communications Flight) at RAF Hendon. Painted white overall with a red flash on both sides of the fuselage, made up with red crosses and blue serial numbers. Photo at RAF Odiham, Hants 1949 - Spitfire - A Look Back Over The Gate p.27. No codes but badges including that of Fighter Command carried below the cockpit. Photos also RAF Aircraft PA100 - RZ999 (air Britain) p.52; Spitfire: The History p.436; Flypast January 2006 p.78 and Flypast March 2006 p.74.
- 22 Mar 51 Suffered Cat.3 damage in a landing accident- whilst landing in a crosswind at Hendon in the early afternoon after a local flight. The aircraft ran off the runway into soft ground and tipped onto its nose. The pilot was uninjured.
- 2 Apr 51 Under repair by a party from No.58 MU, Skellingthorpe until 16 May 51.
- 17 May 51 Re-joined No.31 squadron. By early 1953 the aircraft was on Embassy Flight, housed in the Grahame White hangar, and was known as the 'Clipped Wing Wonder' (Flypast March 2006 p.74).
- 28 Oct 53 To No.3 Civilian Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit at Exeter Airport, Devon coded 'B' in blue below the cockpit and still in overall white. Photo May 1954- Air Pictorial Jul 54 p.208; Aviation News 1/21 p.8. Colour Profile - Supermarine Spitfire Mk I - XVI (004129) . This unit provided calibration and target towing for the Army, Navy, and RAF. The aircraft were Air Ministry owned but civilian crewed. Exeter then held the largest Spitfire unit remaining in the country.

- 6 Jul 54 To No.45 Maintenance Unit RAF Kinloss. Ten other Spitfire Mk XVI aircraft were retired by the unit that year. Four other Spitfires remained with the unit until 1956, being progressively replaced by Vampire FB.5 aircraft.
- 13 Dec 54 Classified non-effective stock.
- 17 Sep 55 Displayed at RAF Kinloss Battle of Britain Day.
- 14 Dec 55 Allotted instructional serial 7293M for issue to No.603 Squadron at RAF Turnhouse from No.45 MU for use as a display airframe.
- 27 Mar 56 Issued to No.602 Squadron at RAF Abbotsinch with the instructional serial 7293M. Photo at this time still in overall white, with code 'B' and RW393 serial crossed out and replaced by roughly applied 7293M serial - Spitfire: The History (021012) p.436.
- 12 Jan 57 No.602 Squadron disbanded at Abbotsinch.
- 9 Mar 57 Re - allocated to RAF Turnhouse (Edinburgh) for display duties and placed outside the station H.Q; 603 Squadron disbanded the following day. As first displayed the aircraft was camouflaged and carrying an approximation of the wartime markings of No.603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force with the fuselage codes XT-A and no serial numbers. Photo - Military Aviation Review Nov 78 p.10. The aircraft was regularly cleaned and inspected by 603 Squadron personnel.
- 75-76 Refurbished by the Engineering Wing at RAF Kinloss. Returned to the gate at Turnhouse by April 76 still camouflaged as XT-A. Photos on Turnhouse Gate - Spitfire: The History (021012) p.436; Spitfire Survivors (015119) p.50; Spitfire - A Look Back Over The Gate (027725) p.27-8; RAF Gate Guards (Simpson-colour); Wrecks and Relics 5<sup>th</sup> Edition 1976 (As of 21 Sep 75, prior to refurbishment and still minus serials); Airfix Magazine Sep 61 p.220; Air Britain Digest Jul 66 p.181; Spitfire Survivors Round The World (021352) p.148; Spitfire Society Journal Autumn 2003 p.12; The Greatest Squadron of Them all (Ross, 2003) p.360; Aerodromes of Fighter Command Then And Now (2014) p.329.
- 4 Oct 89 Stored at RAF St Athan with other former Gateguard Spitfires. Photo at St Athan 1990 - Spitfire - A look Back Over The Gate p.28.
- Mar 95 To RAF Museum Storage and Restoration Centre at RAF Cardington.
- 1 May 95 To Aerospace Museum Cosford, Salop for display, replacing Spitfire XIV MT847 which had moved to Manchester. Photo during assembly the following day - Flypast Jul 95 p.7. On display at Cosford in the sandbagged revetment previously occupied by MT847. Photos – Spitfire Society Journal Autumn 2003 p.12; The Greatest Squadron of Them all (Ross, 2003) p.361.

- 8 Jan 2003 Following replacement on display by Spitfire Mk.1 K9942 from Hendon, moved to storage at RAFM facility at RAF Stafford.
- 16 Mar 05 By road to RAFM MBCC, RAF Cosford, for cosmetic attention prior to display in the 'Living Museum' forming part of the VE/VJ 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in St James's Park, London. Repainted as a wartime 74 Squadron aircraft, TB675/4D-V.
- 28 Jun 05 By road to London for the exhibition, which was open to the public 4-10 July. Photos at the exhibition; Flypast September 2005 p.5; Wingspan International 30 pp.76-77.
- 12 Jul 05 By road to RAFM Hendon for temporary storage.
- 17-18 Sep 05 Displayed at RAFM Battle of Britain weekend event. Photo-Flypast December 2005 p.12.
- 20 Sep 05 Dismantled, and returned to RAFM Cosford for display the following day (21 September).
- 21 Mar 06 Returned to RAFM Hendon by road for further temporary display over the summer, being placed outside by the Milestones building on 24 August 2006, returning to the Bomber Command Hall 12 October 2006.
- 6 Jun 07 By road to RAFM Stafford for storage, following display at the RAF Museum Pageant weekend 2-3 June 2007. Delivered 7 June 2007.
- 21 July 2015 By road to RAFM Hendon for display in Historic Hangars. Photo as delivered – Flypast October 2015.

**TEXT: ANDREW SIMPSON**

**© ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM 2015**