

INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

DE HAVILLAND TIGER MOTH II T6296/8387M
MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER 72/A/455

- 1941 Built by Morris Motors Cowley, Oxford, c/n 84711. Part of an order for 2000 Tiger Moth IIs delivered May 40-Apr 41, serial numbers T5360-T8264, with early deliveries by de Havilland and the rest by Morris, who built 3,500 Tiger Moths of the total production of 8,349 aircraft.
- 13 Jun 41 To No.1 Elementary Flying Training School, Hatfield, Herts.
- 07 Dec 41 No.39 Maintenance Unit, Colerne, Wilts for storage.
- 17 Feb 42 No.7 EFTS, Desford, Leics.
- 23 Sep 46 To storage at No.5 MU Kemble, Gloucester.
- 01 Dec 46 Taken on charge by Royal Navy.
- 11 Dec 46 To Fleet Air Arm at AHU RNAS Stretton, Cheshire. At least 148 Tiger Moths served with the Fleet Air Arm.
- The aircraft's FAA career is documented by the surviving Form 700s, DoRIS Ref.B3195-B3197.
- 21 Oct 47 RNAS Donibristle, Fife for major inspection at the aircraft repair yard there.
- 05 Oct 48 RNAS Stretton, then base for the Northern Air Division of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve.
- 19 Apr 51 RNAS Gosport, Hants; glider towing gear fitted.
Preserved 22 May 52 and depreserved 30 Jul 52.
- 13 Aug 52 RNAS Culham, Oxon - a centre for naval reservists in the Oxford-London area. Used for glider towing for Dartmouth cadets.
- 05 Sep 52 Allocated to Gosport for major inspection, flying in 9 Sep.
- 25 Sep 52 Flew to Roborough/Plymouth Airport, Devon.
- 26 Jan 53 Royal Navy Engineering College, Manadon, Devon.
- 14 Aug 53 RNAS Gosport, mainly a helicopter training unit.

16 Sep 53 Returned to Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon.

16 Aug 54 RNAS Gosport for major overhaul and fabric change - its last in RN service.

21 Jul 55 RNAS Lee on Solent, Hants.

12 Aug 55 RNAS Gosport - 'Dartmouth Flight'.

13 Sep 55 Returned to RNAS Lee on Solent for long-term storage. Preserved 23 Nov 55; depreserved and prepared for service 16 Jul 56.

23 Jul 56 RNAS Bramcote (HMS Gamecock), Warwickshire.

27 Jul -
18 Sep 56 On temporary loan for Dartmouth Cadets Summer training camp.

24 Sep 56 RNAS Lee on Solent for long-term storage. Preserved 19 Oct 56; removed from long-term storage 15 Oct 57, returned to LTS 23 Oct 57. Removed from LTS 22 Jul 58.

23 Jul 58 To RNAS Bramcote for use by Dartmouth Cadets again.

04 Nov 58 To RNAS Arbroath by Air for long-term storage; Preserved 12 Dec 58; depreserved 4 May 59.

03 Jun 59 RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset. Used by CIFE Flight, uncoded, as replacement for BB814.

31 Aug 59 RNAS Lossiemouth, the Navy's largest air station in Scotland.

29 Sep 59 Returned to RNAS Yeovilton, CIFE Flight. Photo with Yeovilton Station Flight 1961 - Aeromilitaria 3/89 p.70 in silver colour scheme.

28 Apr 61 Glider towing equipment fitted.

Nov 61 In use by Heron Flight, Yeovilton.

19 Feb 64 Resprayed to DTD 772A 'e' - Aluminium and yellow band colour scheme. Photo at Yeovilton 1964 after repaint - Tiger Moth - Aeroguide (024163) p.10.

10 May 64 Suffered partial engine failure at 600 feet with glider in tow; slipped glider and made forced landing on airfield; pilot Lt G.L.Shaw.

07 Dec 64 Messrs Plymouth Airport Ltd, Roborough. Operated by Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. Tiger Moths provided air experience for naval cadets from Dartmouth College until replaced by Chipmunks in June 1966, when Moth BB814 made a last landing at HMS Hermes 23 Jun 66.

As described in 'Flight' 24 Nov 1966 p.920, the Naval Flying Grading School - the 'Britannia' Flight - was civilian staffed and gave air experience to all general list Dartmouth Cadets, regardless of their eventual specialisation, with more flying for supplementary list aircrew cadets.

- Jul 65 Notes at Yeovilton coded 'G'.
- 24 Jun 66 To Heron (station) Flight RNAS Yeovilton.
- 29 Nov 66 To No.781 Squadron, Lee on Solent - a communications unit who flew Tiger moths until March 1972. Coded 'LS' in Jun 68 but uncoded by Sep 69.
- 7 Sep 67 Suffered engine failure at 3000 feet over the River Solent; landed safely; crew l/c R A Shilcock and Lt J Fleetwood.
- 13 Dec 69 Final flight. Three flights made during the day of 30 minutes, 1¼ hours and 15 minutes duration. The final 15-minute flight at 1640 hours brought the airframe hours to 4603.20. By now the airframe was well worn - a form 700 note of 23 Aug 69 reads 'Top mainplane rear attachment bolts worn. Aircraft not to be used for aerobatics!'
- 14 Jan 70 Lee-on-Solent Holding Unit for survey.
- 16 Mar 70 To Royal Navy Air Yard Fleetlands, Hants for mods. (None recorded on Form 700).
- 23 Jun 70 Selective survey of the airframe. Inspecting officers' report notes: 'This aircraft is in a dangerous condition and should be grounded pending considerable rectification. Of major concern is the degree of wear in all mainplane root end fittings, bolts and corresponding attachment points on the fuselage, all flying wire attached fittings and all controls in the fuselage'. It was estimated rectification of the above problems would take 438 hours and the work does not appear to have been carried out since RN use of the Tiger Moth was limited by this time. Aircraft beyond economic repair.
- 15 Mar 72 To RAF Henlow for storage for RAFM.
- 16 Mar 72 Engine (No.84223) removed. (Replacement fitted by RAFM)
- 09 May 72 Transferred to RAF charge at RAFM Hendon. Displayed in main hall after museum opened Nov 1972. Restored in B scheme markings introduced in 1941. Photos: Flight Picture Pageant of the RAF and its Museum; Colour - Air Extra No.3 (Frontspiece).

(Replaced original RAFM Tiger Moth I NL985/7015M, RAFM 71/A/741 acquired from RAF Finningley in 1971, burnt out at the Hendon Museum 23 May 1971 and formally written off 2 June 1971)

- 5 Sep 73 Allotted RAF Maintenance Serial 8387M.
- Mar 90 Moved to Battle of Britain Hall during refurbishment for 'Battle of Britain Experience', where it remains on display.

There was at one time a suspected problem with the aircraft's identity - Tiger Moth G-ALAD was registered to the Wiltshire School of Flying as 'ex T6296' on 14 Jun 51 and sold in New Zealand Feb 52, becoming ZK-BAW. It was established in 2010 that this aircraft's real identity is actually L2696, c/n 3581, so the identity of the RAFM airframe is confirmed.

TEXT - ANDREW SIMPSON