



Triennial Report 2003-2006

 **ROYAL  
AIR FORCE** **museum**





## **Mission Statement**

The Museum exists to educate and inform present and future generations about:

1. The history and traditions of the Royal Air Force
2. Air Power and Defence
3. Aviation links with the Royal Air Force

And to promote the Royal Air Force

## **Our Promise**

We promise to do this by the integrated use of exhibitions, collections and the knowledge and expertise of the staff. We aim to maintain our position as a centre of excellence, to enlighten, excite and entertain our customers and provide them all with a quality service.

## **Contents:**

- 3** Introduction
- 4** Trustees
- 5** Senior Management
- 6** Strategic Objectives
- 7** Collecting
- 8** Preserving & Managing the Collections
- 9** Providing Access to the Collections
- 10** Educating Users
- 11** Promoting the Museum
- 11** Supporting the RAF's Strategic & Management Plans
- 13** Maximising Plural Funding
- 14** Using Resources Efficiently
- 15** Increasing the Number of Users
- 16** Developing the Museum
- 17** Volunteers
- 18** Major Sponsors



## Introduction

On 17 December 2003 the RAF Museum opened the Milestones of Flight building at its London site, marking the centenary of the Wright Brothers' first controlled, powered flight. At the same time we also opened the re-located, listed Grahame-White Aircraft Factory building. This triennial report describes the work carried out by the Museum since that date, at its London, Cosford and Stafford sites, much of which is not seen by our visitors.

In particular, throughout this period, we have been heavily engaged in the largest expansion of the Museum since its foundation. The National Cold War Exhibition at Cosford will not only provide the world's first comprehensive coverage of this important period but also fulfils the Trustees' objective of providing covered accommodation for the vast majority of their largest exhibits. The new landmark building will open in February 2007.

## Trustees

### Chairman

Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns GCB CBE LVO FRAeS RAF *(Retired December 2006)*

Air Chief Marshal Sir John Day KCB OBE BSc FRAeS RAF (Retd) *(Appointed September 2004, elected Chairman December 2006)*

### Trustees

Miss Carole J Blackshaw BA FRAeS MBAC *(Appointed September 2004)*

The Rt Hon Baroness Blatch CBE *(Died May 2005)*

Viscount Chelsea *(Appointed December 2004)*

Lord Clarke of Hampstead CBE KSG

Mr Brendan Connor *(Appointed August 2005)*

Sir Neil Cossons OBE *(Retired July 2004)*

Air Vice-Marshal David Crwys-Williams CB FCIS FCIM RAF (Retd)

Mr Michael H Dale CBE

Mr L Antony Edwards BSc MBA CEng FRAeS

Lord Evans of Watford

Sir Richard Evans CBE *(Retired September 2004)*

Sir Gerald Hosker KCB QC FRSA

Sir Roger Jackling KCB CBE

His Excellency Air Marshal I D Macfadyen CB OBE FRAeS RAF (Retd) *(Retired May 2005)*

Ms Jane Middleton MSc FCCA MRAeS *(Appointed September 2004)*

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Pattie *(Retired July 2004)*

Sir Peter Rigby DL D.Univ *(Appointed August 2005)*

Dr Judith Rowbotham *(Retired September 2004)*

Mr Alastair Stewart *(Resigned April 2004)*

Mr Malcolm G F White OBE FRAeS *(Appointed September 2004)*

Mr David Young *(Retired May 2005)*

## **Senior Management**

### **Director General**

Dr Michael A Fopp MA FMA FRAeS

### **Directors**

#### Access & Learning

Joanna Ruddock BA PGDip *to May 2005*

#### Collections

Group Captain A V Hall RAF (Retd) *to May 2004*

Simon Greenish BSc *to February 2006*

#### Finance & Museum Secretary

Stuart Garman FCIS MICM

#### Group Business Development

Group Captain Keith Ifould CBE AFC FRAeS MIL RAF (Retd)

#### Operations

John Kitchen MA Mst (Cantab)

## Strategic Objectives

The Museum has developed a series of strategic objectives in close partnership with its key stakeholder, the Royal Air Force, and its Departmental sponsor, the Ministry of Defence. These objectives serve to support the core curatorial and education work of the Museum under a secure financial framework, whilst seeking to develop the Museum in the future.

### The objectives relate to:

- Collecting
- Preserving & Managing the Collections
- Providing Access to the Collections
- Educating Users
- Promoting the Museum
- Supporting the RAF's Strategic & Management Plans
- Maximising Plural Funding
- Using Resources Efficiently
- Increasing the Number of Users
- Developing the Museum

## Collecting

The Museum's collections continue to grow as a result of both the contraction of the Royal Air Force, which entails the closure of stations and the disbandment of units, and – sadly – the passing of veterans. Significant acquisitions since December 2003 include:

- Gazelle helicopter, Tornado GR1, General Dynamics F-111F, MiG-21 and a 63ft Pinnacle
- Medals and papers of a range of men and women including Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris, Air Vice Marshal Harold Bird-Wilson, Air Commandant Philippa Frances Marshall and Wing Commander Geoffrey Page
- Night Raid, 1917 by C.R. Nevinson; oil on canvas
- Sunbeam Arab aero engine, the world's only known example
- A substantial collection of RAF uniform badges compiled by the late Miss Margaret Nobbs
- The log books of Wing Commander E J B Nicolson VC DFC, Fighter Command's only VC, were bequeathed to the Museum by his widow. Although the Museum has the log books of a number of Battle of Britain aircrew these are the first log books of a VC winner in our collection, and they include a number of flights in Spitfire Mk.I K9942 which is also in the Museum's collection
- Models of Cold War aircraft and missiles used in radar echoing trials
- Manuscript conductor's copy of the RAF March Past in its original form entitled *Adastral I*. The copy is dated 3 August 1918, which pre-dates the first known performance of the march
- Operational photographs of Sarawak, 1964, taken during the Indonesian Confrontation
- The racing and test pilot Alex Henshaw MBE – best known for his record-breaking flights and his work testing Spitfires at the Castle Bromwich Aircraft Factory - donated his collection of papers, trophies and memorabilia, and has generously funded a curatorial post to catalogue the collection
- A statue commemorating the Long March by RAF Prisoners of War from their camps in January and February 1945 was donated by the Royal Air Force ex-Prisoners of War Association, and was unveiled by HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh in May 2003



Above from left to right: Medals of Wing Commander Geoffrey Page DSO OBE DFC. The Long March statue. Radar echoing model of a Tupolev Tu-95MS "Bear". James Nicolson's logbook records the action in which he won the VC, but does not mention his award.



Clockwise from left: Conservation work on the Kawasaki Ki-100 prior to inclusion in 'Milestones of Flight'. Preparing the Lightning for display in The National Cold War Exhibition. Original details are faithfully reproduced

## Preserving & Managing the Collections

The Michael Beatham Conservation Centre at Cosford is one of the world's centres of excellence in aircraft conservation. The skilled technicians undertook an extensive programme of work to prepare aircraft and other objects for display in The National Cold War Exhibition. In order to achieve this, work on the long-term restoration of the Handley Page Hampden and the reconstruction of a Sopwith Dolphin was temporarily suspended, but these projects will resume in the near future.

It is just as important to preserve the skills associated with aircraft construction, conservation and restoration, many of which are no longer relevant to modern aircraft. The Museum has set up an apprentice scheme in association with Telford College and the Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering at RAF Cosford, and the first two trainees are progressing well on their course. A joint project with the British Aviation Preservation Council and the Imperial War Museum – the National Aviation Heritage Skills Initiative – trains volunteer staff in aviation museums across the country in subjects such as health and safety and corrosion control. An RAF Museum representative sits on the Steering Committee and the courses, which are supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, are accredited by the City and Guilds Group.

The long-term project to create an electronic catalogue of the Museum's collections is approaching another milestone, with nearly 250,000 records entered into the computerised Collections Management System (CMS). With the Museum's large and varied collections being stored on three sites, the centralised measuring and analysis of humidity and temperature has resulted in positive cost-effective actions being taken for the long-term preservation of the collections by all departments.

Dehumidification equipment installed in the Cosford storage hangar has greatly improved the environment within the building. Remotely monitored fire detection and intruder alarms have also been installed.

All museums' collections are potentially vulnerable to fire, flooding and other threats. An Emergency Plan for the London site, which will help staff to react to such situations and protect the collections, has been finalised and implemented; work continues on similar plans for Cosford and Stafford.



Above left to right: *The Reading Room is used by a wide range of researchers. Some 80,000 people visited the Living Museum in St James' Park.*

## Providing Access to the Collections

In 2006, the Museum launched 'Navigator', a web-based resource making many of our catalogued records including electronic images available to the public. <http://navigator.rafmuseum.org>

The Department of Research & Information Services (DoRIS) answered an average of over 6500 enquiries per year, whilst some 600 researchers used the reading room each year. DoRIS staff prepared several temporary exhibitions using facsimile documents; themes included the roles played by the RAF on D-Day and at Arnhem, and the life of RAF Prisoners of War in Northern Europe. The Department also contributed to the national Archives Awareness Campaign, with exhibitions featuring original documents.

The Museum gave major assistance to the official celebrations of the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War. A 'Spitfire Scramble' scene was contributed to the 'Living Museum' in St James' Park, featuring members of staff in period uniform with a specially restored Spitfire. The Museum lent several dozen works to the Ministry of Defence art exhibition 'Warriors for the Working Day' amounting to 40% of the entire show. Other works were loaned to the Imperial War Museum for its 'Prisoners of War' exhibition, and the Museum provided material for the Science Museum's 'Inside the Spitfire' exhibition, including a Spitfire and related documents.

## Educating Users

We identified the need to bring access and learning to the heart of the Museum's operations, and an Access & Learning Department was created from the existing Education Department. The Museum offers workshops and demonstrations that relate closely to the subjects of the National Curriculum. In addition to elements of the History syllabus, the Access and Learning teams at the London and Cosford sites are able to offer activities relating to Science, Geography, Numeracy, Citizenship and Art.

The Museum has two interactive centres. The facilities at the London site were expanded during 2003 and renamed **Aeronauts Interactive**, whilst *fun'n'flight* offers Cosford visitors a similar experience. Restructuring of the department has increased the number of school visitors that can be taught each day. The staff have continued to provide the established history and science programmes for schools, supplemented by a number of new initiatives including outreach sessions with local schools and colleges.

**Operation Aviation** is an activity based on a simulated RAF flying mission to deliver emergency aid. It is being developed for use by Air Cadet units and schools, and is also intended to develop teamwork and planning skills for higher education and management training.

Members of staff from all parts of the Museum gave talks, papers or arranged seminars. The Director General gave keynote speeches at international symposia and evening lectures to interested groups. Other members of staff regularly visit external meetings and evening sessions for historical societies and other specialist groups. Members of the Department of Research & Information Services gave papers at seminars arranged by the RAF Historical Society and the Social History Society, and also gave a series of talks in the Historic Hangars during the Spitfire Weekend held in September 2006.

A major educational resource is being created around the new National Cold War Exhibition. On-line curriculum packs, classroom sessions and interactive teaching are included. The site [www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org.uk](http://www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org.uk) opens with the exhibition in February 2007.

Below left to right: Part of the extended interactive centre at the London site. Activities for schools include making and launching rockets.



## Promoting the Museum

The Museum's marketing strategy has made use of a number of traditional techniques – such as leaflets, press advertisements, public relations and attendance at travel trade exhibitions – as well as modern and innovative methods. The corporate identity was redesigned to reflect that of the Royal Air Force, emphasising the close links between the Service and its Museum.

**A new Museum website was launched in 2003, and a range of newsletters tailored to general visitors, schools and corporate hire clients is distributed by email.**

During the summer of 2004, the Cosford site was one of the host venues for the BBC 'People's War' exhibition. Volunteers were trained to act as facilitators to help visitors to share and record their wartime memories.

Our contribution to the 'Living Museum' in 2005 gave us a presence in central London. An estimated 80,000 people visited the exhibition, many of whom would not have previously encountered the RAF Museum. Also in 2005 the Museum supported the national initiative 'Their Past, Your Future' by providing workshops and demonstrations at the West Midlands venue where this exhibition was on display. Access to an even larger potential audience was provided when the Museum was featured in the BBC TV series 'The People's Museum' in March 2006. Members of staff discussed selected objects from our collections and the programme included shots of our exhibitions.

## Supporting the RAF's Strategic & Management Plans

**The Museum is very much a shop window for the Royal Air Force, enabling the public to learn more about the service and its history.**

**During the period of this report the Museum has worked closely with the RAF to help serving personnel appreciate – and learn from – their heritage.**

All recruits undergoing initial training at RAF Halton visit the RAF Museum London for a day of formal training. This initiative has been universally well-received by RAF staff and trainees alike. The programme combines exercises, presentations, and exploration and has been hailed as a vast improvement on class-room based education in historical subjects. All Officer Cadets from Cranwell visit the London site, and the Museum assists other units with "Force Development" projects looking at historical topics.

The Museum supports the RAF's Youth Strategy, in cooperation with staff at Armed Forces' Careers Offices. An exhibition at the London site celebrating the Air Cadet organisation was opened by Dr John Reid, then Secretary of State for Defence, in April 2006. The display features a Slingsby Cadet Mk 3 glider of the type in which thousands of ATC and CCF cadets made their first solo flights. The cockpit of a Viking glider – which currently equips many of the Volunteer Gliding Squadrons – has been incorporated into the Aeronauts Interactive gallery. The Cadet glider was donated by Bill Walker OBE, a former Perthshire MP and honorary President of Air Cadets Gliding.

*Clockwise opposite: Bill Walker (left) explains the Viking glider to Dr John Reid (centre). The Museum Newsletters. Children from local schools meet the Red Arrows.*



## Maximising Plural Funding

The majority of the Museum's operating costs are funded by the Ministry of Defence. The Museum generates earned income to fund enhancements to the displays, major projects and development. This 'plural funding' has become more important during the period of this report, and in addition to the traditional sources of income from donations and sponsorship, the Museum has sought to develop other income streams through commercial activities such as merchandising and licensing.

Significant sums have been received from both personal and corporate donors, both in the UK and via the RAF Museum American Foundation. A number of high-profile fundraising dinners have been mounted in association with the Air League, and these have proved financially beneficial to both organisations.

Our trading arm, Royal Air Force Museum Enterprises Ltd, operates the shops at London and Cosford, mail order, corporate events and licensing. The Museum has developed, in association with the Ministry of Defence, Jervis Entertainment Media Ltd and 4Kids International, a ground-breaking range of licensing activities that will bring income for both the Museum and the Ministry.

The trading company has produced significant profits over the past three years and a six-figure sum has been transferred to the Museum.



## Using Resources Efficiently

During the period of this report the Operating Grant-in-Aid received from the Ministry of Defence remained effectively static at £6.4 million – a reduction in real terms – whilst operating costs rose as a result of increased visitor numbers after the opening of major developments in 2003. In addition to increasing efforts to generate income, a number of initiatives were implemented to streamline the Museum's operation and increase efficiency. These included staff, marketing, market research and budget reductions.

Savings in management overheads at a senior level were made in 2005, when the posts of Director Collections and Development Manager were combined. The strategic work previously undertaken by the Development Manager is now shared among the other Directors.

Changes in the pattern of opening hours of the London site were introduced in August 2006. It was observed that some buildings received few visitors in the morning and others in the afternoon – all parts of the site are now open to the public for at least part of every day, making optimum use of the Safety & Security staff available.



From left to right: A fundraising dinner was held to mark the 75th anniversary of Britain winning the Schneider Trophy outright. The Museum manages the licensing of RAF-branded goods

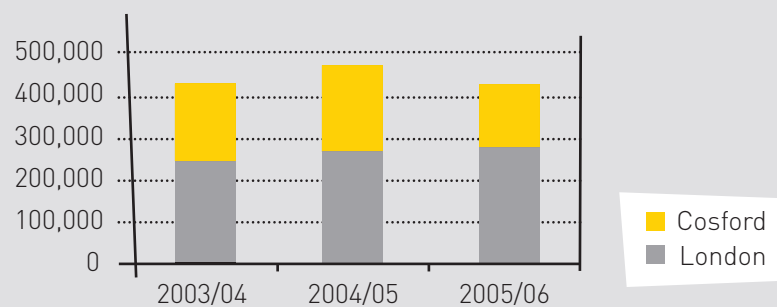
## Increasing the Number of Users

In addition to general visitors, the key groups that use the Museum are schools, corporate hire clients and those carrying out research in the Reading Room. A wide variety of events has been developed to attract families, ranging from quizzes and craft activities to a Search and Rescue week. The Museum also takes part in events with a national focus such as The Big Draw and Museums & Galleries Month. Word of mouth – personal recommendation by satisfied visitors – remains one of our most valuable marketing tools.

A range of activity packs for schools has been developed, together with worksheets for Scouts working towards their aviation badges.

The numbers of research enquiries answered and research visitors both declined slightly during the period of this report; this reflects a national trend which may be due to the increased availability of information via the internet. A publicity strategy has been developed to raise awareness of our research collections and encourage their use.

### Visitor Numbers



For two years the Cosford site has been disrupted by building works – this has led to a predicted reduction in visitor numbers.

The Museum's website was relaunched in December 2003; the numbers of visits received were: **2004/05** - 1,243,045 **2005/06** - 1,765,133



Left: The Big Draw attracted artists of all ages and abilities.



Above: *The National Cold War exhibition features "Hotspots" focussed on key subjects*

## Developing the Museum

The major project during the period of this report has been the creation of The National Cold War Exhibition at the Cosford site. This ambitious project, based on a striking building, examines a wide range of topics relating to the Cold War, including the political, economic and cultural aspects as well as military operations and equipment. Much of the latter has been obtained through cooperation with the other Service Museums funded by the Ministry of Defence, whose assistance we gratefully acknowledge. The project has also enabled us to bring virtually all the large aircraft, previously displayed in the open, under cover – a major contribution to their long-term preservation.

Our plans for the future include an exhibition at the London site, in association with Boeing, on helicopters to coincide with the 25th anniversary, and enhancements to the displays relating to the RAF's maritime role with support from the Maritime Air Trust. We hope also to improve the exhibition in the Grahame-White Aircraft Factory building, which houses most of our aircraft from the First World War; this will include both the role played by air power in the Great War and the development of the aircraft industry in the local area. We also intend to refurbish the Battle of Britain Hall.

Our archive, library and visual arts collections have long needed extra storage space, and we intend to create both modern storage facilities and a larger, more accessible reading room to give more people access to these rich collections.



## Volunteers

**The Museum is blessed in having staunch supporters for both its public sites. The Society of Friends of the Royal Air Force Museum and the Aerospace Museum Society were founded to assist Hendon and Cosford respectively. Today, both societies work corporately for the benefit of the Museum as a whole. Their work is fundamental to the success of the Museum and they carry out tasks which are both independent of and integrated with the Museum staff.**

Members enjoy a number of privileges including discounts in the shops and previews of exhibitions. They organise their own events, including receptions, field visits and lectures.

Both societies play a critical role, alongside staff, in researching/cataloguing the collections, restoring/conserving aircraft and vehicles, maintaining the marine craft collection and keeping the aircraft clean. They carry out guided tours and assist the visitor. In short, our volunteers are a boundless resource of 'roving ambassadors' for the Museum. If you would like more details please contact: -

The Secretary  
Society of Friends of the RAF Museum  
Royal Air Force Museum  
London  
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The Secretary  
The Aerospace Museum Society  
Royal Air Force Museum  
Shifnal  
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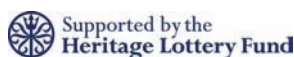
## Funding

Detailed accounts are published on our website at:  
<http://www.rafmuseum.org/london/policy-performance/reports.cfm>  
and copies are available on request from the Museum Secretary or the Charity Commission.

## Major Sponsors

The Trustees of the Royal Air Force Museum would like to thank the following sponsors who have supported the work of the Museum at the London, Cosford and Stafford sites:

Advantage West Midlands	Goodyear Tyres	RAF Historical Society
Aerospace Museum Society, Cosford	Heritage Lottery Fund	Robert Kiln Charitable Trust
Air Foyle	Hewlett Packard plc	Robertson Trust
Augusta Westland	His Royal Highness Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz Al Saud	Rockwell Collins
BAE Systems	Honeywell Aerospace	Rolls-Royce plc
Beaver Westminster	Human Factor	Royal Aero Club
Boeing	Impact Image Ltd	Royal Air Force Museum American Foundation
Bridgnorth District Council	Inflite Engineering Services Ltd	Rural Regeneration Zone
Louis S Casey Esq	Inveforth Charitable Trust	St. Petersburg Collection
Charlotte Bonham-Carter Charitable Trust	His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah	Serco Plc
City Educational Trust	Kirby Laing Foundation	Shropshire County Council
Close Brothers Military Services	Lockheed Martin UK	Smiths Aerospace
Cobham plc	Lufthansa	Society of Friends of the Royal Air Force Museum
Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering	Marriott Hotels	Specialist Computer Centres
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DuPont Personal Protection	MBDA UK Ltd	Thales Group plc
L A Edwards BSc MBA CEng FRAeS	Ministry of Defence	Lord Trotman of Osmotherley
Eurofighter GmbH	Mitsubishi Heavy Industries	Robert C Tullius Esq
European Regional Development Fund	Newsdesk Media Group	Bill Walker OBE
Lord Evans of Watford	Northrop Grumman	Walker Trust
General Dynamics (UK)	Pilgrim Trust	Wolfson Foundation
	RAF Cosford Air Day	



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