

INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

DE HAVILLAND MOSQUITO B.35 TJ138/7607M  
MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER 1994/1351/A

- 24 May 44 Ordered from de Havillands at Hatfield as one of a batch of 70 aircraft to contract 555/C23A, from the serial batches TH976-TH999 and TJ113-TJ158. Ordered as a B.XVI but delivered as a B.35. Batch delivered 11 Jul 45 - 9 Nov 45. Merlin 113/114 Engines. A total of 274 Mosquito B.35s were built, 65 by Airspeed, the rest at Hatfield by de Havilland, from a grand total of 7,781 Mosquitoes of all marks.
- 28 Aug 45 To No.27 MU Shawbury, Shropshire for storage - many Mosquitoes were stored here in the post-war period.
- 11 Feb 48 To Martlesham Heath, Suffolk - purpose unknown.
- 14 May 48 Task complete and awaiting collection.
- 20 May 48 Back to No.27 MU for further storage.
- 13 Oct 50 Arrived at Celle, West Germany.
- 31 Oct 50 Allocated to No.98 Squadron, Celle. (TJ138 is now the only surviving Mosquito B.35 that saw squadron service, although VP189 preserved in Canada served with 231 OCU).
- Early Nov 50 No.98 Squadron moved to Fassberg, West Germany. Here, the aircraft was repainted from camouflage to an overall silver scheme, with the squadron insignia on the tail painted by instrument technician F/S Bob Breakwell. Photographed in overall silver scheme as VO-L, and carried the Squadron commander's pennant on the starboard nose.
- 20 Feb 51 Returned to UK for storage at No.38 MU Llandow (Aircraft Storage Unit).
- No.98 Squadron re-equipped this month with Vampire FB5 fighter/attack aircraft.
- 15 Jul 53 To Brooklands Aviation Ltd, Sywell, Northants for conversion to TT35 standard. In all, 205 Mosquito B.35s were converted to this standard, 35 of them from TJ138's production batch. Some were given the unsuccessful ML type G wind driven target winch mounted beneath the fuselage, but most conversions carried a winch inside their modified bomb bay.
- 07 Jan 54 Work completed.

- 18 Jan 54 To No.22 MU Silloth, Cumbria awaiting allocation to a unit.
- 08 Mar 54 To No.5 Civilian Anti-Aircraft Co-Operation Unit (CAACU) at Llanbedr, flying alongside Beaufighters, Vampires and Meteors in the unit. Carried the code letter `Z' and overall silver colour scheme with black/yellow underside stripes. One of five Mosquitoes flown by the unit at Llanbedr, all delivered in 1954.
- One of TJ138's regular civilian crewmen as Target Towing Operator at this time (May 1956-November 57), with some 118 hours in '138 in that period was Mr Edwyn Lewis, his pilot often being Veronica Volkorsz, previously an ATA pilot, with nine other pilots recorded for his sorties. See 'Target Rolling – A History of Llanbedr Airfield', by Wendy Mills, p.47-48 and logbook extracts on Aircraft Dept Mosquito file.
- 01 Jan 58 Unit moved to Woodvale, Lancs. Provided targets for all three services at the Ty Croes range off the North Wales coast, and off Benbecula in Scotland, acting as targets for radar plotting in connection with simulated missile attack, and anti-aircraft gun practice.

TJ138 still carries side engine cowlings from fellow No.5 CAACU Mosquitoes TA664 and TJ119; TA664 served with that unit Apr 54-Jan 58, and TJ119 from Mar 54-Sep 56.

The unit transfer involved only one Mosquito, VR806, the others going to No.10 Maintenance Unit at RAF Hullavington for storage and disposal - except for TJ138, which although not recorded on the movement card, seems also to have moved to Woodvale around this time, nominally on No.5 CAACU charge according to the movement card, for use by the Short Bros operated THUM (Temperature and Humidity) Flight. Perhaps the two units shared the aircraft. The THUM Flight had operated the RAFs' last three Spitfires until June 1957, replacing them with three Mosquitoes, which made daily high altitude flights (c.30, 000 feet) until serviceability problems prompted their replacement by radar-tracked balloons. The Mosquitoes passed briefly to No.5 CAACU before moving to No.27 MU for storage and disposal.

- 18 Apr 59 TJ138 made the last Mosquito THUM flight, flying from Woodvale. Photos: Aviation News, 8-21 May 1981; Royal Air Force Woodvale-The First Fifty Years (Ferguson) p.64. Pilot John Formby, in charge of the THUM Flight.  
This was the last of 2,800 THUM flight sorties by Spitfires and Mosquitoes since the unit formed in 1951. TJ138 still retained its TT equipment at this time.
- 01 May 59 THUM Flight disbanded at Woodvale, though 'Aeroplane' Friday 8 May 59 records that a 'final' Mosquito sortie was flown on this day (by TJ138), contradicting the above date, as does 'Flight', also 8 May 59.
- 09 Jun 59 Back to No.27 MU Shawbury for disposal, along with Mosquito 35 TA722, also from Woodvale. See 27 MU Aircraft Inwards Book (DoRIS).

03 Jul 59 Declared Non-effective airframe.

08 Jul 59 Allocated 7607M for exhibition purposes. ('M' serial was actually applied on the aircraft.)

29 Jul 59 To No.71 MU Bicester, Oxon, by road. Kept with other historic aircraft, including Spitfires K9942 and X4590, and Hurricane P2617 also now displayed at Hendon. Photographed there Sept 62 - see Wrecks and Relics 2nd edition (1963).

26 May 60 Allocated to RAF Thorney Island, Hants. Stored as part of the Air Historical Branch Collection. Noted still with 71 MU on 11 December 1964; by 1965 was at RAF Hullavington.

1960 Displayed at Horseguards Parade, by now returned to camouflage scheme and No.98 Squadron colours as VO-L, and re-serialised TJ138. Colour photo, 1966 - Lost Aviation Collections of Britain (Ellis)

Jan 67 Moved by road to RAF Colerne, Wilts by this date and stored alongside other historic aircraft. By now, TJ138 was 'defective in several respects' (File note 20 Jun 67). Photos: Airfix Magazine Jan 67 p.180; The Lyneham Globe Vol.3 No.7 July 1975 p.8.

Surprisingly perhaps TJ138 was not used in the 1963-68 period for either of the films '633 Squadron' or the sequel, 'Mosquito Squadron' although a hire charge of two pounds per day was quoted for use in the latter film (File Note).

1970 Externally refurbished at RAF Colerne.

17 Oct 75 With the impending closure of RAF Colerne the following March and the resulting dispersal of its historic aircraft collection, TJ138 moved via RAF Bicester to RAF Finningley, Yorkshire, where some spare-time work was done on the aircraft by RAF Personnel.

Feb 77 Pressure on space at Finningley caused by the impending Queens' Silver Jubilee review of the RAF again caused TJ138 to move on, this time to Swinderby, Lincolnshire. Here the aircraft was kept in the hangar of the RAF School of Recruit Training and used as a backdrop to passing out parades. At this time the engines were still occasionally 'turned over' by hand although the aircraft needed refurbishment and lacked the fabric covering to the fuselage and a number of cockpit fittings Photo at Swinderby - Aviation News 23 May-5 Jun 80 p.4

Nov 86 To RAF St Athan, South Glamorgan by road to join the regional collection of historic aircraft. Fuselage damaged during unloading - the nose parted company with the rest of the fuselage, but was repaired, using an official repair scheme made up by British Aerospace.

1991 Repainted at St Athan, again in No.98 Squadron colours.

- 06 Feb 92            Dismantled and loaded at St Athan for transport to the RAF Museum, Hendon, by team from RAF Abingdon, arriving there the following day. It remained there on display in the Bomber Hall until June 2003, replacing Mosquito T.III TW117. Photo on arrival - FlyPast Apr 92 p.8. Photo on display - Aeroplane Monthly Aug 96 p.42
- 19 Jun 2003        Moved to new Milestones building at RAFM Hendon for continued display. Photos on display – Flypast February 2004 p.6; Aviation News March 2004 p.213.

Twelve of the surviving 30 Mosquitos are B.35 aircraft, including the nose of TJ118 from the same production batch, now preserved at the De Havilland Aircraft Heritage Centre (Mosquito Aircraft Museum), with the fuselage of the same aircraft now also kept separately at the Museum after spending some time with a private owner in Oxfordshire.

Also from this batch is TH998, with the National Air & Space Museum, USA.

The RAF Museum has a second Mosquito B.35 in its collection, TA639 at the RAF Museum, Cosford.

**TEXT ; ANDREW SIMPSON**

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