

21 August 2018

## Valiant V-Bomber doors open for special event

**Date:** 15 September 2018

**Time:** 1pm-4pm and 6pm-9pm

**Cost:** £13.50 per person

The third of four '100 Cockpits and Cabs' events taking place at the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford this year, will be held on Saturday 15 September. Up to 600 aviation fans will have the exclusive opportunity to get a closer look inside more aircraft and vehicles from the Museum's collection including the Valiant, one third of Britain's V-Bomber force, during an afternoon and evening session.

The RAF Museum Cosford and London is home to over 200 aircraft, tanks and vehicles and event organisers have selected 100 from the collection that they believe visitors will be keen to get a closer look inside. The '100 Cockpits and Cabs' events will celebrate the Royal Air Force Centenary by giving visitors access to aircraft and vehicles, spanning the services entire career.

The September event at Cosford will be themed around aircraft and vehicles from the National Cold War Exhibition and the transport and training collection in Hangar 1.

From the Cold War collection, aircraft and vehicles open on the night include the **Vickers Valiant B1**. The Valiant was the first of Bomber Command's V class aircraft and established Britain's air-borne nuclear deterrent force before pioneering operational in-flight refuelling in the Royal Air Force. Not only was it the first V-Bomber to enter service, it was also the first to drop an operational British nuclear weapon over Christmas Island in 1957. Event organisers hope aviation fans will seize the rare opportunity to step on board one of Britain's nuclear strike force aircraft, which played a vital role during the critical Cold War years.

Another highlight will be the chance to get up close to the Museum's collection of Cold War vehicles including the Russian **BMP-1**. The BMP-1 went into production in the early 1960's and marked an important departure from previous armoured personnel carriers. Not just an infantry carrier, it provided a measure of combat capability with the vehicle. Its high mobility, effective anti-tank weapons combined with its armoured protection made it a significant addition to Soviet battlefield forces.

Other Cold War aircraft and vehicles open for the special event include the **Alvis Saladin** armoured car (close view only), **Trabant** vehicle, **British Aerospace Tracked Rapier**, **Short Brothers Belfast**, **Scottish Aviation Twin Pioneer CCII** and the **Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG 21PF** (close view only).

The event theme also extends to include a selection of the Museum's transport and training vehicles displayed in Hangar 1 and for the first time ever, the **Westland Wessex HC2** helicopter will be open for close viewing. The HC Mk2 entered RAF service in the early 1960s and became a familiar sight on anti-terrorist operations in Northern Ireland and supporting UN Peacekeeping forces in Cyprus. In the mid-

1970s twelve aircraft were converted to the HAR Mk2 variant, given a bright yellow high-visibility colour scheme and with the addition of a winch were used for search and rescue duties around the UK coast. The last RAF Wessex helicopters (Cyprus based HC Mk 2s) retired in 2003. This is the first time the Wessex has been included in an open evening event and visitors will be able to view the helicopter from a raised platform being installed especially for the event.

Also open on the night in Hangar 1 will be the **Landrover Series 1, de Havilland Devon, Hawker Siddeley Andover E3A** and the **Scottish Aviation Bulldog T Mk 1**.

To make sure visitors get the most out of the event, there will be a large team of Volunteers manning each aircraft or vehicle and available to answer any questions. A special Log Book can be purchased for an additional £1, allowing ticket holders to keep a record of the aircraft and vehicles they have accessed during the event!

A total of 600 tickets are available for the event taking place on Saturday 15 September and aviation fans will have up to three hours to enjoy the exclusive access. The afternoon session will run from 1pm-4pm, followed by an evening session 6pm-9pm. The Museum will close at 5pm, however the Visitor Centre and Refuel Restaurant will remain open for ticket holders, before doors to the aircraft and vehicles open at 6pm.

Tickets are now available to purchase through the Museum's website [www.rafmuseum.org/cosford](http://www.rafmuseum.org/cosford) and cost £13.50 per person which includes parking (minimum height restrictions apply). The final '100 Cockpits and Cabs' event at Cosford will take place on Friday 7 December, details on this and the events taking place at the RAF Museum London are also available online.

Attending the exclusive 'Open Cockpits and Cabs' events is an opportunity to raise vital funds for the RAF100 Appeal, which is a joint venture between the Royal Air Force and the four major RAF charities – the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, the Royal Air Forces Association, the Royal Air Force Charitable Trust and the Royal Air Force Museum. The aim of the Appeal is to raise money for the RAF family and to create a lasting legacy as we celebrate 100 years of the Royal Air Force.

Ends...

#### Notes to Editors:

**100 Cockpits and Cabs events will take place at Cosford and London on the follows dates in 2018:**

COSFORD		LONDON	
Saturday 15 September	1pm-4pm and 6pm-9pm	Friday 21 September	6pm-9pm
Friday 7 December	6pm-9pm	Saturday 8 December	1pm-4pm and 6pm-9pm

The aircraft and vehicles open at each event will vary, totalling 100 across the two RAF Museum sites throughout 2018.

#### **Aircraft available for close viewing on 15 September 2018 include:**

- Landrover Series 1
- Westland Wessex HC2 (close view only)
- de Havilland Devon
- Hawker Siddeley Andover E3A
- Scottish Aviation Bulldog T Mk 1
- Alvis Saladin armoured car (close view only)
- BMP-1 armoured personnel carrier
- Trabant vehicle
- Tracked Rapier

- Short Brothers Belfast
- Scottish Aviation Twin Pioneer CCII
- Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG 21PF (close view only)
- Vickers Valiant B1

- Follow the RAF Museum on social media:



@rafmuseum



rafmuseumcosford



@rafmuseum

- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am
- Admission to the Royal Air Force Museum is free of charge.
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at:  
<https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/about-us/media-vault.aspx>
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Michelle Worthington on 01902 376212 or email [michelle.worthington@rafmuseum.org](mailto:michelle.worthington@rafmuseum.org)
- All images used should be credited: '©Trustees of the Royal Air Force Museum'