

11 June 2019

Trustees complete 101 mile fundraising walk



On Sunday 9 June RAF Museum Trustee Nick Sanders and Museum Ambassador Robin Southwell completed a gruelling 101 mile walk at the RAF Cosford Air Show.

Nick and Robin led the march of over 100 miles to raise money for a bespoke outdoor children's playground at the Museum site in Cosford. The aviation themed playground will include miniature versions of iconic aircraft and is set to enhance the visitor experience for local families and school groups visiting the Museum.

Crowds gathered at the Cosford Air Show to watch Nick and Robin take their final steps, which led them through a Guard of Honour from local RAF Air Cadets Wales and West Region.

The walkers were finally greeted at the finish line by RAF Cosford Station Commander Group Captain Tone Baker, family, friends and Museum staff, who wished them well. Not ones to keep still, they then joined the RAF Chief of Air Staff for lunch at the Air Show.

The Cosford Museum has seen a 20% increase in visitor numbers on the back of the RAF Centenary year. Now in the 101st year, Museum Trustees undertook the walk to build on that success with their sights firmly set on raising funds for a playground that will engage the Museum's youngest visitors with the RAF story.

Their journey was incredibly tough with the weather being against them for a large proportion of the walk, but they arrived at Cosford in good spirits with the sun shining, having literally gone the extra mile to kickstart the fundraising for a play area where children can learn and also have fun.

There is still time to support their efforts donate now at:
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/RAFMuseum101Walk>

The RAF Museum is a registered charity, number 244708.

Nick Sanders of Sutton Coldfield headed up the walk with assistance from other Trustees and VIPs associated with the RAF Museum on the walk between RAF Cranwell near Lincolnshire and the RAF Museum at Cosford in the West Midlands.

The walk of just over 100 miles took-off from RAF Cranwell on Wednesday 5 June and followed a route passing through the east of Nottingham, crossing over the River Soar at Kegworth, through Lockington, Walton on Trent and Coven before a safe landing at the Cosford Air Show on Sunday 9 June.

Nick Sanders, is an aerospace engineer by training and has spent many years turning around struggling industrial businesses.

For more information about the fundraising walk and the RAF Museum, visit rafmuseum.org.

Ends...

Notes to Editors:

Nick Sanders is available for interviews Please contact to arrange

Media enquiries/further information:

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Trustees' Walk

Mile 0

Cranwell:

- The main recruitment and training RAF Station
- Home to the RAF College Cranwell and flying schools
- Located in the heart of Lincolnshire
- A long and distinguished history dating back to the very beginning of the RAF.

Mile 21

Orston:

- A WW2 satellite airstrip
- Home to No. 16 (Polish) Service Flying Training School
- Flying Airspeed Oxfords. An example can be seen at the RAF Museum.

Mile 26

Bingham

- Former RAF Newton was nearby
- Home to RAF bomber squadrons in 1940
- From 1941 an important training base
- Post-war home to RAF School of Education, RAF Police Training School and Headquarters to the Air Training Corps
- Currently home to No. 1936 (Newton) Squadron of the Air Training Corps

Mile 33

Cotgrave (The Nottinghamshire Golf & Country Club)

- Memorial to six airmen who crashed in a WW2 Wellington bomber
- The Wellington hit an oak tree whilst attempting to land back at RAF Tollerton.

Mile 34

Tollerton

- RAF Tollerton was nearby
- Satellite station for RAF Newton
- Many training accidents happened here
- Repair centre for Handley Page Hampdens and Avro Lancaster's
- Now home to No. 2425 (Nottingham Airport Squadron) Air Training Corps
- Now called Nottingham City Airport

Mile 43

Gotham

- A rare WW2 pillbox
- To defend against a German invasion
- Also used to house a searchlight against German bombers

Mile 47

Kegworth

- Memorial to the 1989 Kegworth air disaster
- A Boeing 737 crashed, killing 47 passengers

Mile 50

East Midlands Airport

- Former RAF Castle Donington
- WW2 training base for Vickers Wellingtons and Douglas Dakotas
- East Midlands Aeropark has several British aircraft and aero engines on display

Mile 54

King's Newton

- Station on the Melbourne Line, a military railway
- It was used to practice the demolition and rebuilding of railways for the Allied invasion of mainland Europe

Mile 75

Alrewas

- Near the National Memorial Arboretum
- Britain's year-round national site of remembrance
- Supported by RAF Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC

Mile 107

Cosford

- Since 1938, RAF Cosford has been an important station for technical training
- During WW2 also a base for the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) ferry pilots
- A hospital for the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service, now home to the Midlands Air Ambulance helicopters
- Since 1979 the RAF Museum and the yearly RAF Cosford Air Show

BIOGS:

Nick Sanders

Nick Sanders is a Birmingham based businessman and a Trustee of the RAF Museum.

Nick started his career as an Aerospace Engineer and has had a life long passion for anything to do with aviation. For the last 15 years he has specialised in turning around ailing industrial/ engineering businesses either as a Chief Executive or Chairman. He now has a diverse range of business interests from classic cars to backing start up businesses.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society and the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

He also supports and mentors students at Manchester University from where he is an alumnus.

Nick has previously walked from John O'Groats to Land's End (a total of 876 miles) and raised over £50,000 for charity in the process so he has a fair idea how painful this walk is going to be!

Robin Southwell OBE

Aerospace expert Robin Southwell lives in Cobham, Surrey and is a trustee of the RAF Museum. He joined Airbus Group in January 2003, initially as CEO of Airtanker Ltd during which time he secured the largest military PFI in history with the Royal Air Force. He was awarded an OBE in 1998.

Robin's career has mainly been in the aerospace industry, initially joining BAE Systems upon leaving university in 1981. His early career there included marketing and negotiating contracts for commercial and military aircraft worldwide. He established the Asset Management Organisation in the mid-1990s before moving to Australia for three years, during which time the Royal Australian Air Force selected both the BAe Hawk and missile systems from MBDA.

Robin is chairman of Quest Aviation Services, Airbase Group Ltd and On Air Dining. He is a fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society and non-executive director of Linley and Farnborough International Limited. He is also a governor of Parkside School and was appointed by the former Prime Minister, David Cameron, as a UK Business Ambassador. He is also joint owner of Belle Vue Speedway team in Manchester.