

8th February 2011

Historic RAF aircraft to fly into Cosford

Friday 11th February 2011

ETA 11.30am

The Royal Air Force Museum Cosford will be taking delivery of its latest acquisition, an RAF Dominie T.MK.1, on Friday 11th February 2011 at 11.30am, when it makes its final flight into RAF Cosford. This particular aircraft is significant because it was the first Dominie to enter RAF Service.

The Dominie T.MK.1 was built as a navigation training aircraft and has been in RAF service since 1965. On arrival at RAF Cosford, the aircraft will undergo a short period of preparation and defueling before going on permanent display as part of the Museum's extensive collection.

Al McLean, Curator at the RAF Museum Cosford says:

"We are very pleased to be receiving a Dominie. It is at present the longest serving aircraft in the RAF, having been in continuous use for more than 45 years. However, its timeless design means it looks far more modern and it will be an excellent addition to the Museum aircraft collection."

A total of twenty Dominies were built in the 1960's to replace the Meteor NF (T) 14 and initially flew in a silver/day-glow colour scheme which later changed to the red, white and grey scheme and finally to today's black, grey and white. They were used to train Navigators, Air Engineers and Air Loadmasters in systems management, air leadership, decision making and teamwork and could reach speeds over 320MPH. The retirement date for the Dominie was brought forward by two years due to cancellation of the Nimrod and the planned reduction of the Tornado fleet.

This is the first of a number of new aircraft expected at the RAF Museum Cosford this year. The RAF Museum Cosford is home to over 70 aircraft and the award winning National Cold War Exhibition. The Museum is open daily from 10am, admission is FREE. For more information on the Museum please call 01902 376200 or visit www.rafmuseum.org

If you would like to attend the arrival or for further information and all media enquiries please contact Karen Crick on 01902 376208 or karen.crick@rafmuseum.org

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Notes to Editors:

- The Dominie will be flown in by 55 Squadron based at RAF Cranwell.
- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am
- FREE admission
- Photo available on request
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at:
<http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/media-enquiries/downloads.cfm>

AIRCRAFT HISTOY - HAWKER – SIDDELEY DOMINIE T.MK.1 XS709

- 1964 Built by Hawker Siddeley Aviation Ltd at the former De Havilland factory at Hawarden, Chester, to contract KU/E/10, awarded April 1964. One of 20 of the type built as navigation trainers to replace the Meteor NF (T) 14 in that role, including serials block XS709 – XS714. Constructor's number 25011.
- 30 Dec 64 First flight, this being the first of the type to fly.
Given Class B marking G-37-65, signifying an aircraft undertaking trials for Rolls-Royce.
- 30 Mar 65 Delivered to RAF as the first of its type delivered. Initially flew in silver/Day-Glow colour scheme.
To No 1 Air Navigation School, RAF Stradishall, Suffolk. The first navigators to qualify for their wings on the Dominie passed out in April 1966. Stradishall initially operated thirteen Dominies for high/fast training, supplemented by eleven Vickers Varsitys for low/slow training, with Dominie students receiving some 45 hours of flying instruction spread over 21 sorties, half of them at night, with later exercises, each with two students working on a transverse navigator's bench at the rear, flying to Malta or Gibraltar via Nice or Istres.
To College of Air Warfare, RAF Manby, Lincs – one of six Dominies on strength there, with black College of Air Warfare titles.
Returned to No. 1 ANS, which disbanded in August 1970, its flying assets passing to No 6 FTS.
- 1970 No 6 FTS, RAF Finningley, Yorks, individual code 'M'. Colour scheme changed to red, white and grey scheme. Provided initial airman aircrew training for Air Electronics Operators, Air Engineers, and Air Loadmasters.
- 1983 Used in final year of Dominie solo displays at air shows.
- Sept 95 Following closure of RAF Finningley, the Dominie Squadron of No 6 FTS moved to RAF Cranwell, Lincs.
- Nov 95 Finningley units reformed within No 3 FTS, RAF Cranwell, XS709 still with individual code 'M'
- 1 Nov 96 Navigation Squadron of No 3 FTS at RAF Cranwell redesignated No 55 (Reserve) Squadron, with eleven aircraft on strength. It served as the flying arm of the Navigator and Airman Aircrew School, which on 1 November 2001 combined as part of the squadron to provide all the flying training for the RAF's rear crew.
From 1992/93, eleven of the Dominie fleet (including XS709) received a major mid-life upgrade to what was initially designated T.Mk.2 standard, though later generally referred to still as T Mk 1, replacing obsolete V-Force era equipment with installation of a modern avionics suite, new systems installation, new longer nose profile to accommodate Super Searchwater radar and cabin layout for up to five students/instructors, the work being done under contract by Racal and Marshall Aerospace at Cambridge Airport.
From c. 1996, flying in high-visibility all-over black livery with white fuselage top, and fin code 'M'
The Dominie's role with No 55 (R) Squadron was to train WSOs (Weapons Systems Officers) and WSOPs (Weapons Systems Operators) for Nimrods and rear seat aircrew on the Tornado GR4, together with training transport/flight refuelling crews. Most training was in UK airspace over land and sea, with some flights to Europe.
The retirement date for the Dominie was brought forward by two years due to cancellation of Nimrod MRA4 in October 2010 and the planned reduction in size of the Tornado GR4 fleet and final retirement of the Tornado F.3 due in 2011.
- 19 Jan 2011 Made final Navigational Exercise ('Nav Ex') over Wales that morning, touring West Wales Haverfordwest, Cardiff, St Athan, and Swansea. Part of the training programme on the Dominie had included low level radar and low level navigation, usually as part of a high-low-high flight profile training sortie of two or three hour's duration, with the Welsh valleys being an ideal location.
- 20 Jan 2011 Held on ground as 'Air Spare' for final six-ship retirement formation flypast for the Dominie at RAF Cranwell, Lincs on that day (a Thursday); the Dominie was then the oldest type on the RAF inventory.
- Feb 2011 Flown into Cosford for preservation by RAF Museum.