

14th December 2011

A Herculean Christmas Gift Arrives at Cosford!

A Hercules C130K Mk.3 has just become the latest aircraft to go on display at the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, arriving just in time for Christmas. The aircraft was moved from the airfield to the Museum's site yesterday and placed in its new permanent display space, outside overlooking the Museum site. This supersized Christmas present took a team of fifteen Museum Technicians and RAF Personnel three hours to safely move the aircraft into position, once the aircraft had been defueled.

Now one of the largest aircraft in the Museum's extensive collection, the Hercules C130K Mk.3 made its final flight into RAF Cosford in August courtesy of No 47 Squadron, RAF Brize Norton. Since its arrival earlier this year, the aircraft has undergone a short period of maintenance carried out on the airfield.

The XV202 Hercules C130K Mk. 3 was an American aircraft built by Lockheed in Marietta, Georgia and acquired by the RAF in 1966, used mainly on longer routes and for paratrooping. This particular aircraft was one of 30 Hercules modified during the early 1980's, with the fuselage being lengthened by 15ft. Work was carried out by Marshall of Cambridge (Engineering) Ltd, using fuselage plugs in front of and behind of the wing.

RAF Museum Curator, Al McLean says:

"We are very pleased to have this iconic aircraft, particularly as it has such a long record of service with the Royal Air Force and it makes a fine addition to the Cosford site."

Visitors wishing to see the Hercules can now do so on a daily basis and over the Christmas period. The Museum will be open daily throughout December from 10am apart from Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. The Museum will then close again on New Year's Day and will reopen on Monday 2nd January 2012 from 10am. Admission is FREE. For more information on the Museum please call 01902 376200 or visit www.rafmuseum.org

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Notes to Editors:

- Photos available on request
- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at:
<http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/media-enquiries/downloads.cfm>
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Michelle Worthington on 01902 376 212 or email michelle.worthington@rafmuseum.org

LOCKHEED HERCULES C130K/C.3 XV202

Built as Lockheed at Marietta, Georgia as a C-130H-130-LM Hercules. Given USAF serial No. 66-8552 from serials block 66-8550/8573. C/N 4223/4224, 4226/4228, 4230/4233, 4235/4238, 4240/4247, 4251/4253

Batch sold to RAF as Hercules C-130K/C.1 XV200/XV223 as one of 66 C-130K Hercules acquired for the RAF between December 1966 and May 1968.

Manufacturer's No. 382-4226

- 17 Aug 67 Delivered to RAF as Hercules C Mk.1 following painting and fitting out by Marshall of Cambridge.
- Converted to Hercules C.Mk.3 with fuselage lengthened by 15ft/4.57m by Marshall of Cambridge (Engineering) Ltd as one of 30 such conversions done between 1980 and 1985, using fuselage plugs fore and aft of the wing supplied by Lockheed-Georgia. Used mainly on longer routes and for paratrooping.
- 1981 With MoD (PE) at Cambridge as newly converted C.3.
- Photo around this time – Air International February 1983 p.69.
- To RAF Lyneham Transport Wing, (Wiltshire – latterly consisting of Nos. 24, 30, 47 and 70 Squadrons and 242 O.C.U, all part of No. 38 Group) and from 1986 retrofitted as a C.3P with in-flight refuelling probe above the cockpit.
- 1994 Displayed at International Air Tattoo, RAF Fairford, Glos, when serving as part of the Lyneham Transport wing.
- 21 Jan 2009 To Marshall, Cambridge for storage.
- 2011 Current with No 47 Squadron, RAF Brize Norton – with the planned closure of RAF Lyneham in 2012, the last four Hercules left Lyneham on 1st July 2011.
- 12 Aug 2011 Planned delivery date by air at 11.30 from RAF Brize Norton to RAFM Cosford.
- This was expected to be the final landing of the last RAF C130K Mk.3 (remaining RAF Hercules Mk.1 and Mk 3A aircraft being due to remain in service until December 2012)

TEXT; ANDREW SIMPSON

RAF MUSEUM 2011