

8th May 2012

Conservation Centre Celebrates 10 Years with Spitfire flypast

Sunday 13th May 2012

Conservation Centre Open 10.00am to 2.00pm

Spitfire flypast scheduled for 1.30pm (weather permitting)

On Monday 13th May 2002 the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre at the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford was officially opened for business by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Michael Beetham. Built as a centre of excellence for aircraft restoration, a team of skilled Technicians and Apprentices have during the last decade conserved many of the world's most historic and rarest aircraft. Now about to celebrate its 10th anniversary the Museum is looking back at some of the aircraft to have passed through its doors during this period.

The Centre will be celebrating this milestone anniversary with a special open day on Sunday 13th May. The Centre will be opening up its doors and visitors are invited to come along to view the projects currently being restored which include the Vickers Wellington and the Handley Page Hampden.

As part of the day's celebrations visitors will be able to take a trip down memory lane and view a timeline which will note all the significant restoration projects in the Centre's history. Major projects to have passed through the doors of the Conservation Centre include a Tempest, Vampire, Fairy Battle, the Miles Mohawk and the most recent completion, the Dolphin which is the only example in the world.

A highlight for visitors on the day is a flypast from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Spitfire, scheduled for 1.30pm (weather permitting).

RAF Museum Conservation Centre Manager, Tim Wallis says:

"Since its inception, the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre has taken centre-stage on many occasions, being the first of its kind in so many ways. This very special, purpose-built facility enables the Museum to manage all of its artefact conservation needs in a sympathetic and robust manner. Notwithstanding this, Sir Michael and the Trustees showed great vision and commitment to the preservation of National aviation heritage skills through developing the apprenticeship scheme. The team here are all very proud of our work and the many National or local awards, so we look forward to sharing our experiences with the visiting public on this special day."

Looking to the future, the Centre has a busy schedule with the continued work on the Wellington and the Hampden, plus the latest arrival, the Nimrod and the Dornier which is due to arrive at the Museum later this year.

Any visitors unable to attend the anniversary open day will have a second opportunity to view the current restoration projects during the Open Week from the 12-17 November 2012. Entrance to the Museum and the Conservation Centre for the 10th anniversary open day is FREE of charge and open from 10.00am to 2.00pm. For further information please contact the Museum on 01902 376200 or visit www.rafmuseum.org

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Notes to Editors:

- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am
- FREE admission
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Michelle Morgans on 01902 376212 or michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at: <http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/media-enquiries/downloads.cfm>