

26th February 2009

Giant Helicopter to be ‘Open Week’ Star

23rd – 28th March 2009

10.15am to 1.00pm each day

FREE Admission

One of Shropshire’s hidden gems, the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre (MBCC) at the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford will be opening its doors to visitors for one special week, from Monday 23rd to Saturday 28th March 2009.

Opened in May 2002 by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Michael Beetham, the MBCC is regarded as one of the world’s foremost centres of excellence in aircraft conservation and restoration. Its skilled technicians undertake careful, extensive work to prepare aircraft and other projects for display at both of the Museum’s sites in Cosford and London with the MBCC team responsible for the conservation and routine maintenance of some 300 aircraft.

By popular request March’s Open Week has been extended to Saturday 28th March to enable those aviation enthusiasts who have week day commitments to enjoy a visit.

Restoration and conservation projects that will be view to the public include the Sikorsky MH-53M Pave Low IV, one of the world’s largest helicopters, whilst it undergoes conservation work before being placed on permanent display in Cosford’s multi award-winning National Cold War Exhibition.

Other projects on view will include the restoration of the Museum’s Single Pioneer, a communications aircraft which will be liveried in the silver colours of the Royal Air Force of Oman; an FE2b Bomb Carriage which will be fitted to the only surviving FE2b Bomber from World War I before both it and the Bomb Carriage go on public display at Cosford’s sister Museum in London; plus other on-going projects such as the Handley Page Hampden TB1, Sopwith Dolphin, LVG, Farman F.141, Range Safety Launch, Fairey Battle Mk1 and the Vampire T11.

Manager of the Conservation Centre, Tim Wallis says:

“The Centre is busier than ever before, with time-critical projects lined up and being undertaken by my stalwart staff and a small band of trained volunteers. The diversity of skills are being thrust at the increasing need to get the job done not just in time, but correctly and sympathetically in terms of conservation. Despite this busy schedule, we are all looking forward to hosting our visitors in March”.

Admission to the Conservation Centre will be free and from 10.15am to 1.00pm each day during Open Week. Cosford's main Museum will open daily from 10am – 6pm (last admission 5pm). Admission and parking are both FREE of charge. Another Open Week is planned for later in 2009, 9 – 14 November.

For further information, please contact the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford on 01902 376200 or visit www.rafmuseum.org.

...Ends

- **Notes to Editors**

- Royal Air Force Museum, Cosford, Shifnal Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Photos available on request
- Open daily between 1000 – 1800 (Last admission 1700)
- Free admission and parking
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Karen Crick on 01902 376 208 or karen.crick@rafmuseum.org