

13 October 2014

RAF Museum teams up with the University of Birmingham and the BBC to offer online First World War course

Marking the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, registration is now open for 'World War One: Aviation Comes of Age', which will allow users to explore the aerial aspect of the conflict through a series of academic resources and multimedia content.

The course will look at:

- How technological innovations turned the aeroplane into a machine of war and how British factories developed to supply the pilots of the Western Front with aircraft and ammunition.
- How the aeroplane became a commercially viable tool for the first time, with passenger and mail routes starting to appear.
- How the government tried – and failed – to regulate the aviation industry.
- How all the key moments in the air in the Second World War followed from lessons learned during the First World War.

The RAF Museum provided locations for filming across its site in London. This included the Grahame White office that was active in overseeing aircraft production during the First World War. This footage will form the core of the course's lecture content. Many of the RAF Museum's aircraft will feature in various guises. Additionally, various documents from the RAF Museum's collection were used in the filming and some will be made available to students once the course launches in October.

A MOOC is a Massive Open Online Course - these are free, open, online courses designed to offer a taste of higher education to learners from across the UK and the world. The University of Birmingham is delivering new MOOCs in partnership with the BBC, Futurelearn, the UK's first MOOCs provider established by the Open University.

The course has been developed by Air Commodore (ret'd) Dr Peter Gray of the University of Birmingham and it will be delivered by world-class academics from the university. Dr Gray is also a member of the RAF Museum's Research Board and one of the UK's leading air power historians. The course enables learners worldwide to sample high-quality academic content via an interactive web-based platform from a leading global university, increasing access to higher education for a completely new cohort of learners.

The MOOC will allow the RAF Museum to interact with a range of learners in a new and innovative manner that moves beyond the traditional confines of the museum environment. Learning forms an integral aspect of the Museum's new 'First World War in the Air' exhibitions, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which opens to the public in December 2014. The exhibitions at both Museum sites in London and Cosford explore the vital role air power played in delivering victory in the First World War through the stories of those involved in this pioneering field.

This initiative forms part of the RAF Museum's desire to develop its academic and research programmes as it moves towards the RAF's Centenary in 2018 and beyond.

RAF Museum Aviation Historian, Ross Mahoney:

"The Royal Air Force Museum is proud to have worked with the University of Birmingham and the BBC on this new innovative course, 'World War 1: Aviation Comes of Age'. The First World War was a key moment in the development of military aviation and by its end; Great Britain had formed the world's first independent air force, the RAF. However, many myths have developed around the use and influence of aviation in this period. This course, filmed at the RAF Museum, explores those myths and shows how aviation gripped people's imagination and transformed the very character of warfare, which still influences the world today."

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR WORLD WAR ONE: 'AVIATION COMES OF AGE'](#)

...ends

Notes To Editors:

- www.rafmuseum.org
- First World War In the Air opens December 2014 at RAF Museum London
- Follow us on Facebook – The Royal Air Force Museum
- Follow us on Twitter – @RAFMUSEUM
- Follow us on Instagram – rafmuseum
- Open daily from 10am
- Admission to the Royal Air Force Museum is free of charge.
- RAF Museum images & logo available at:
 - <http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/media-vault.aspx>
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact
 - LONDON - Ajay Srivastava on 020 8358 6410 or email: ajay@rafmuseum.org
 - COSFORD – Michelle Morgans on 01902 376212 or email michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org
- All images used should be credited: '©Trustees of the Royal Air Force Museum'
- Admission to the Royal Air Force Museum is free of charge