

1<sup>st</sup> April 2009

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday Bonanza for Online Collections

**The Royal Air Force Museum is proud to announce the re-launch of its online collections database, Navigator, with the inclusion of over 16,000 new images from the portfolio of the renowned aviation photographer Charles Brown – a fitting addition, as part of the online collection's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday celebrations.**

The Navigator website aims to present a growing selection of records from the Museum's Collections Management System (CMS). This database is designed to electronically record all the objects contained within the Museum's collections and, through Navigator, provide private and professional researchers, aviation buffs and history lovers with a free resource to learn more about the history of the Royal Air Force, its personnel and the objects they would have used.

Commenting on the website, the Museum's Head of Collections Management, Adam Shepherd, stated:

"Navigator is a very important part of the Museum's long term objective to provide more access to its unique collections, which are estimated to number over one million objects – mostly held in storage. The CMS, from where the Navigator records are gleaned, is of primary importance to the management and preservation of this diverse collection. Navigator enables the Museum to present some of its hidden objects, including equipment of various types, photographs and artworks, to a wider audience than ever before. While it must be emphasised that it is not a complete catalogue of the Museum's collection Navigator allows anyone with internet access to study many of the objects which the RAF Museum is preserving for future generations."

To date the public are able to view over 50,000 object records, most of which include images. To help celebrate the re-launch of Navigator and mark its 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday a large section of the Museum's Charles Brown photographic collection, acquired in 1979, can be viewed online. The 16,197 photographs, mainly 5"x4" glass plate negatives, have been documented and scanned and will be permanently accessible on Navigator. The photographs cover the period 1929-1965 and include many of the incredible air-to-air photographs for which Brown made his name. Many of these photographs can be purchased online at <http://www.rafmuseumphotos.com/>. The digitisation of a further 15,000 35mm cellulose acetate negatives will commence in the near future and these images will eventually be added to Navigator.

Commenting further Adam also adds:

"Navigator is an ongoing project that demonstrates the Museum's commitment to educating and informing present and future generations about the history and traditions of the Royal Air Force and aviation in general. It also follows our principle that as many people as possible should have access to the collections. In view of these commitments Navigator, along with the main Museum website, has been made easier to use, its design more engaging and DDA compliant."

To view the Royal Air Force Museum's online collections please go to <http://navigator.rafmuseum.org>

**Notes To Editors:**

- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily between 10am – 6pm (Last admission 5.00pm)
- Free admission and parking
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Karen Crick on 01902 376208 or [karen.crick@rafmuseum.org](mailto:karen.crick@rafmuseum.org)