

14 September 2015

New Apprentices join award winning Conservation Centre team

The Michael Beetham Conservation Centre (MBCC) at Royal Air Force Museum Cosford is delighted to welcome the arrival of three new Apprentices. The new recruits will join the Museums growing conservation team and multi award winning apprenticeship scheme, now in its tenth successful year.

Adam Ellis aged 18 from Wolverhampton, **Joshua Sault** aged 17 from Brownhills and **Maddie Whiting** aged 17 from Bewdley recently joined the team which now has a total of six Apprentices.

After starting their three year apprenticeship with the Museum on 1 September 2015, all three Apprentices are settling into the new working environment and have been partnered with a senior Apprentice who offers guidance and support. After only a few weeks in the new job Adam, Joshua and Maddie have already been busy working on test pieces of sheet metal, assessing their ability to achieve precision and accuracy whilst using various hand tools and materials.

RAF Museum Apprentice Maddie Whiting said:

"Since the age of ten I have always wanted to be an engineer and having spent several years in the RGS Worcester Cadets, I developed a fondness for the Armed Forces. I started looking into apprenticeships as way into this career path and found a lot were standard factory based schemes. When I saw the vacancy at the RAF Museum, I jumped at the chance and applied. I am thrilled to be given such a unique opportunity to work with historical aircraft and long term I hope to pursue a career within the Royal Air Force as an engineer."

RAF Museum Apprentice Joshua Sault said:

"I am a huge aviation fan! I am a member of a flying club and was in 1444 Brownhills Squadron Air Cadets for 4 ½ years and I regularly visited the RAF Museum Cosford as a child. I attended the Conservation Centre Open Week two years ago with my Cadet group and the Conservation Centre Manager spoke to us about the current projects, in particular the Handley Page Hampden. This really sparked my interest in becoming an aircraft engineer and now I'm actually working here I feel like I'm living the dream! The progress on the Hampden in the last two years is amazing and I can't wait to start contributing to the project."

RAF Museum Apprentice Adam Ellis said:

"I took a construction course at school and have twelve months experience as a carpenter, but engineering is what I would like to pursue. I used to visit the RAF Museum Cosford as a child and when the opportunity came up for an engineering role based here, I took it. I hope that the skills I learn at the Museum will broaden my horizons for future employment."

The RAF Museum Apprentices undertake all their hands-on heritage skills training in-house at the Museum's Conservation Centre, where they each work side by side with a Master Craftsman who

mentors them through their daily tasks. Many of the aircraft within the Museum's collection are sole survivors and supporting documentation and procedures don't exist. Museum Apprentices are encouraged to use their own initiative to develop, in consultation with their mentor, novel ways around complex and unusual engineering issues. This way of learning has been proven with past Apprentices to make them extremely capable, competent and self-confident individuals. Like those before them Adam, Joshua and Maddie will work on a wide variety of aircraft during their apprenticeship and will each be given a specialist project which may include some work on the long term restoration and conservation of the Museum's Vickers Wellington and Handley Page Hampden Bombers.

Over the ten years the Museum's apprentice programme has been running, adjustments have been made to ensure our youngsters get the very best practical training and the associated support they need to give them the best possible start in their chosen careers. As well as working at the RAF Museum, this year's new recruits are attending City of Wolverhampton College. At College they will learn modern Fabrication and Welding Techniques as well as studying the associated legislation and the supporting academics. At the end of year 1 they should have completed Performing Engineering Operations – Fabrication and Welding Level 2 and gained an Intermediate Apprenticeship in Fabrication and Welding. They will then move on to level 3 courses and work place vocational assessments leading to Level 3 Technical Certificate in Fabrication and Welding as well as their Advanced Apprenticeship in Fabrication and Welding.

The Museum is committed to preserving Aviation Heritage through its conservation of aircraft and associated exhibits, whilst recognising the need to ensure that unique skills are retained, nurtured and developed amongst the younger generation in respect of fostering ongoing aircraft conservation efforts for the foreseeable future.

Aviation fans will be able to gain behind-the-scenes access to aircraft conservation work when the Conservation Centre opens to the public from 9-14 November 2015. Visitors will have a rare opportunity to view current projects and the chance to speak with the skilled Technicians, Apprentices and Volunteers about their work. Open from 10.15am – 1.00pm and admission is £5.00 per person. For more information on the Conservation Centre Open Week visit www.rafmuseum.org.

Ends...

Notes to Editors:

- Follow us on Facebook – The Royal Air Force Museum, Cosford
- Follow us on Twitter – @RAFMUSEUM
- Follow us on Instagram - rafmuseum
- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am
- Admission to the Royal Air Force Museum is free of charge.
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at:
<http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/media-vault.aspx>
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Michelle Morgans on 01902 376212 or email michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org
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