

Flying Sikhs - A History of Sikh Fighter Pilots

The Royal Air Force Museum presents an exclusive opportunity to view a brand new documentary on Sikh fighter pilots, directed by Navdeep Kandola

Date: Sunday 22nd November

Time: 1400hrs

“Flying Sikhs – A History of Sikh Fighter Pilots” provides an intimate portrait of the Sikh pilots who contributed so valiantly to British success in World War I and World War II. The history of the Sikhs who flew in the Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Air Force and the Indian Air Force has been forgotten, yet their bravery was recognized widely by both the military and the public during the dark days of the Blitz and the brutal Japanese invasion from the East.

Drawing on interviews with the last remaining pilots, rare and personal archive materials, and unseen footage, Flying Sikhs pays testimony to the brave and selfless contributions these unsung heroes made to the war efforts across the world.

The dramatic and often emotional documentary reveals the pioneering role that Sikhs have played in both introducing and sustaining aviation in India. It was a Sikh – the Maharaja of Patiala, Bhupinder Singh – who procured the first Bleriot monoplane and Farman biplanes in 1910.

The first ever Indian pilot to try to enlist as a pilot in WWI was Hardit Singh Malik, the only Indian pilot to miraculously survive the war and later went on to become PM of Patiala and High Commissioner to both Canada and France. The documentary includes first hand accounts taken from the only TV Interview of Sardar Malik and a rare interview with his daughter Harji Malik.

Also included are interviews with the last remaining Sikh pilots from WWII, Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh DFC and Mohinder Singh Pujji DFC, who are both now in their nineties.

Air Marshal Arjan Singh led pilots in the Burmese front in the Second World War and later led the Indo-Pak and Indo-China air assaults. Pujji had an impeccable record for bravery and saved a 300 strong battalion of lost American soldiers that were given up for dead in the dense Burmese forests.

Although the countless other Sikh pilots from the great wars are now deceased, their histories are represented by the recollections of outstanding pilots such as Manmohan Singh, Mehr Singh DSO, Prithpal Singh and Air Marshal Shidev Singh.

To register to watch this film for free, call: 020 8358 4849 or email groups@rafmuseum.org

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Notes To Editors:

- Royal Air Force Museum, Grahame Park Way, London, NW9 5LL
- Open daily between 10am – 6pm (Last admission 4pm)
- Free admission and parking

- Director: Navdeep Kandola; Producer: Clare Cooke
- Executive Producer: Sikh Art & Film Foundation
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Ajay Srivastava on 020 8358 6410 or ajay@rafmuseum.org

LISTING:

Flying Sikhs - A History of Sikh Fighter Pilots

The Royal Air Force Museum presents an exclusive opportunity to view a brand new documentary on Sikh fighter pilots. From the introduction of aviation through two World Wars and recent conflicts, Sikhs have been at the forefront of Indian aviation. Directed by Navdeep Kandola

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