



Transformed American Air Museum to open at IWM Duxford

***SAVE THE DATE* Press preview on Wednesday 16 March 2016.**

To RSVP email press@iwm.org.uk

IWM Duxford's transformed *American Air Museum* will open to the public on Saturday 19 March after a major redevelopment.

The newly-transformed *American Air Museum* will explore the story of Anglo-American collaboration in twentieth and twenty-first century conflict, as seen through the eyes of the people linked with the aircraft and objects on display. From Private to President, the *American Air Museum* tells the personal stories of people whose lives have shaped or been shaped by their experiences of conflict. It focuses on the key role played by American air power, in conflicts from 1918 to the present day, with dramatic displays of historic and contemporary aircraft.

The *American Air Museum* will be home to 850 objects, including equipment, uniforms, keepsakes and photographs. Many of these have never been seen by the public before.

Highlights at the newly-transformed *American Air Museum* will include:

- An F-111 aircraft which was operational in the Gulf War. The aircraft is accompanied by former BBC correspondent Kate Adie's experiences of reporting on the F-111 strikes in Libya and CNN cameraman Dave Rust's testimony on the Bosnia War.
- An A-10 aircraft, used in Iraq and Afghanistan. Alongside the A-10, visitors will meet a man who won one of America's highest gallantry awards, and discover how heroism nearly cost him his life.
- The immense B-52 Stratofortress, the aircraft that embodied the Cold War, alongside the recollections of Jack Revelle, a bomb disposal officer who dealt with the Goldsboro incident, where a B-52 armed with nuclear weapons crashed in North Carolina in 1961.
- The C-47 Skytrain transport aircraft, a veteran of D-Day, which dropped troops and supplies into occupied Europe and the remarkable story of 'Duke' Boswell, who parachuted from a C-47 Skytrain into action on 6 June 1944.
- The P-47 Thunderbolt, which served with the Ninth Air Force, attacking targets on the front line after D-Day, together with the story of Virginia Irwin, a pioneering journalist who was also attached to the Ninth Air Force.

- The impressive B-24 Liberator aircraft, accompanied by a crane, saved by IWM from Willow Run, the gigantic Ford plant in America, and a newly-conserved Cletrac tractor and bomb trailer, which can be seen on display for the first time.
- The cutting-edge SR-71 Blackbird and the personal experiences of Colonel Richard Graham, showing how pilots prepared for such technologically-advanced missions.
- The newly-displayed Clarkair Bulldozer, representing the role of African-American servicemen who constructed the air bases in Britain for the United States Army Air Forces during the Second World War.
- The UH-1H Iroquois 'Huey' helicopter, an iconic symbol of the Vietnam War.
- Compelling new personal stories of 85 people whose lives were changed by war, told through film interviews and personal objects.

Diane Lees, Director-General of IWM says: *"The transformed American Air Museum will tell the story of the relationship between Britain and America in very human terms. Personal stories come to the fore, vividly demonstrating the consequences of war in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. From the pilot to the female riveter who built the aircraft; the African-American engineer who built the airfields to the courageous female journalist who reported on the action, visitors come face-to-face with people whose moving stories are inextricably linked with the formidable aircraft on display. The impact of global warfare is told from contrasting perspectives, giving visitors a rounded view of the lasting effect of contemporary warfare."*

The £3 million transformation has been made possible with the support of the Board of Trustees of the American Air Museum in Britain and a number of funders, sponsors, trusts, foundations and individual donations, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Butterwick Trust, Mr Ross Perot, Jr., Mr and Mrs John F Bookout, Jr., DCMS/Wolfson Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund, Estate of Harry Fagen, Federal Express Corporation, Hathaway Family Foundation, Northrup Grumman Corporation, Dale Rosenbloom and Lucia Rodriguez, Estate of Ltc Donald H Standiford (Ret), Frederick and Barbara Clark Telling.

The *American Air Museum*, a stunning Foster + Partners-designed building, was originally built at IWM Duxford in the late 1990s on the former site of First World War US hangars, to present the best collection of American military aircraft on public display outside North America. It stands as a memorial to the approximately 30,000 US airmen and women who were killed while serving from Great Britain during the Second World War.

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Notes to Editors



Heritage Lottery Fund

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk
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The American Air Museum

Part of the IWM Duxford visitor experience, the *American Air Museum* stands as a memorial to the almost 30,000 US airmen and women who gave their lives flying from British shores in the Second World War in the defence of democracy and freedom.

Since its opening in 1997, the 70,000 square foot museum has hosted 5.5 million visitors who have come to pay tribute to the fallen airmen and to admire the outstanding collections and exhibits.

The museum is the only facility of its kind outside the United States that commemorates and highlights the special bond between the United States and the United Kingdom.

IWM Duxford

IWM Duxford is Britain's best-preserved Second World War airfield, with a fascinating history that dates back to the First World War. Its story reflects the landmark achievements made in aviation history. IWM Duxford is Europe's premier aviation museum, where historic buildings intersperse with state-of-the-art exhibition halls, including AirSpace and the American Air Museum. Historic aircraft can regularly be seen taking to the skies from Duxford's wartime airfield. Through the rich displays of aircraft and the powerful stories of the men and women involved, we tell the story of the impact of aviation on the nature of war, on people's lives and on the social and economic history of the region. With one of the finest collections of tanks, military vehicles and artillery in the UK, we also show the impact of technological development on war and conflict.

Open Daily:

Summer 2015: 15 March to 24 October 2015 10am to 6pm. Last entry at 5pm.

Winter 2015/16: 25 October 2015 to 11 March 2016 10am to 4pm. Last entry at 3pm.

IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique Collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM London

IWM London – IWM's flagship branch – tells the stories of those whose lives have been shaped by war through the depth, breadth and impact of our Galleries, displays and events. Visit our brand new First World War Galleries featuring over 1,300 objects from IWM's collections, explore what life was like at home during the Second World War in *A Family in Wartime*; delve into the world of espionage in *Secret War*; visit our award-winning *Holocaust Exhibition*; discover stories of bravery in *The Lord Ashcroft Gallery: Extraordinary Heroes*; see work by some of Britain's most significant 20th Century artists in our art galleries or take in our latest major temporary exhibitions. Our family learning sessions and events encourage debate and challenge people's perceptions of war.

Open daily from 10am – 6pm (except 24 - 26 December)

IWM London, Lambeth Road, London, SE1 6HZ.

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Our other branches are [IWM North](#), housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; [IWM Duxford](#), a world-renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; [Churchill War Rooms](#), housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser [HMS Belfast](#).

First World War Centenary

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the First World War, a landmark anniversary

for Britain and the world. IWM will mark the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year programme of cultural activities across the country, including the opening

of brand new First World War Galleries at IWM London in 2014. For more information visit www.1914.org

