



Thursday 16 July 2015

Spitfires take to the skies for The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show at IWM Duxford

Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September

Tickets must be booked in advance.

Twenty Spitfires will take to the skies this September as part of IWM Duxford's Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show, commemorating the 75th Anniversary of this crucial aerial battle.

This mass display of Spitfires, above Britain's best-preserved Second World War Airfield, will include Supermarine Spitfire Mark I N3200 - recently restored and returned to Duxford by American philanthropist Thomas Kaplan and received by His Royal Highness, The Duke of Cambridge. This Spitfire was originally flown from RAF Duxford in 1940 by Squadron Leader Geoffrey D. Stephenson.

The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show will tell the story of Duxford's pivotal role in this famous conflict. In September 1940, some 60 Spitfires and Hurricanes were dispersed every day around Duxford and Fowlmere and on 15 September 1940, known as 'Battle of Britain Day', *Bader's 'Big Wing'*, operating from Duxford, twice took to the air to repulse Luftwaffe attacks aimed at London.

Visitors can experience what it was like to work at RAF Duxford in 1940 with the re-creation of a Spitfire scramble during the air show. Upon the instantly recognisable sound of a Second World War air raid siren, Hispano HA-112 MIL (Buchon) aircraft will fly in and strafe the airfield. As a scramble bell sounds, living history interpreters representing Second World War RAF fighter pilots will race to protect this vital Battle of Britain airfield and Supermarine Spitfires chase off the enemy aircraft.

These extraordinary experiences and sights will give visitors to The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show an insight into the life and work of the Battle of Britain fighter pilots who flew from RAF Duxford.

The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show takes place on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 September and tickets are only available in advance.

– Ends –

For more information, images and interviews, please contact
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Notes to Editors

All flying is subject to weather, serviceability and operational commitments.

IWM Duxford - Battle of Britain exhibitions

It was at RAF Duxford that the first Spitfires came into service, with the pilots of No.19 Squadron. Visit our *Battle of Britain* exhibition, which is contained in the hangar that was home to those Spitfires. Discover how Britain defended its skies during the Battle of Britain and hear the memories of those young Spitfire pilots.

In February 1940, Douglas Bader was posted to No.19 Squadron. Bader was the most famous of the Fighter Command pilots who flew from RAF Duxford. You can see his dress uniform in our *Historic Duxford* exhibition, amongst the personal stories and mementoes of a number of Battle of Britain pilots who served at RAF Duxford.

Place yourself at the heart of Fighter Command operations as you step into the *1940 Operations Room* and discover how fighter aircraft were directed into battle. Hear the sound of a German air raid over Duxford and see the equipment, charts and plans which mapped the movements of the aircraft in the skies overhead.

RAF Duxford - Battle of Britain History

RAF Duxford forms a central part of the history of the Battle of Britain.

RAF Fighter Command was divided into groups. 11 Group operated from South East England. 12 Group covered the area further north, protecting the Midlands and London's northern flank. Duxford controlled the southernmost sector of 12 Group's area.

By the summer of 1938, Nos. 19 and 66 Squadrons at Duxford were selected to re-equip with the new Supermarine Spitfire. The first Spitfire was flown into Duxford in August 1938 by Jeffrey Quill, Supermarine's test pilot.

In February 1940, Flying Officer Douglas Bader was posted to No.19 Squadron. Bader is the most famous of a number of Fighter Command aces who flew from Duxford.

Bader found himself on familiar territory, as he left the RAF from Duxford in April 1933, retiring on medical grounds and entering civilian life – if he couldn't fly, he didn't want to remain in the RAF.

As Bader said, *"The fact that I left the Royal Air Force at Duxford and I came back into it at Duxford, through the same bloody gate, is what comes to mind."*

By June 1940, with Belgium, Holland and France having fallen to the German forces, and the conquest of Britain being their next objective, Duxford was placed in a high state of readiness. Duxford's first Hurricanes arrived in July 1940 with the formation of No.310 Squadron, made up of Czechoslovakian pilots who had escaped from France.

At the end of August 1940, Air Vice-Marshal Trafford Leigh-Mallory ordered the Hurricanes of 242 Squadron, now commanded by Douglas Bader, down from Coltishall, to join 19 and 310 Squadrons on daily standby at Duxford.

As the Battle progressed, 12 Group was instructed to protect 11 Group's airfields during attacks. Air Vice-Marshal Leigh-Mallory, Commander of 12 Group, was frustrated by this supporting role. He thought that

the Duxford-based pilots could be more successful if they joined the Battle in 'Wings' of three or more squadrons.

Air Vice-Marshal Keith Park, Commander of 11 Group, had experimented with Wings. During the Battle, he found that grouping more than two squadrons together was slow and risky.

However, Leigh-Mallory was impressed with the performance of 19 and 310 Squadrons and authorised Bader to lead 242, 19 and 310 Squadrons, operating together as a Wing.

On 9 September 1940, the Duxford Squadrons successfully intercepted and turned back a large force of German bombers before they reached their target. On the strength of this, two more squadrons were added to the Wing. No 302 (Polish squadron) with Hurricanes, and the Spitfires of No.611 Auxiliary Squadron, which had been mobilised at Duxford a year before.

Every day, some 60 Spitfires and Hurricanes were dispersed around Duxford and Fowlmere. Bader's 'Big Wing', now known more formally as 12 Group Wing, was ready for action by 15 September 1940, which became known as 'Battle of Britain Day'. On this historic day, they twice took to the air to repulse Luftwaffe attacks aimed at London.

Sometimes they met with success, but sometimes they failed to support 11 Group in time, leaving its airfields open to attack. Even at the height of the Battle, this caused tension between Leigh-Mallory and Park, who was supported by Air Chief-Marshal Dowding, Commander-in-Chief of Fighter Command. This controversy continued after the Battle when Dowding was replaced and Leigh-Mallory stepped into Park's job.

Overall, RAF Fighter Command was successful, the threat of invasion passed and Duxford's squadrons had played a vital role in the victory.

Ticket prices for The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show

NEW for 2015: Tickets for The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show are only available in advance; you will not be able to buy tickets on the day of the air show.

Early booking discounts, including half-price child tickets, are available until Sunday 2 August. From Monday 3 August, standard prices apply. Booking will close on Sunday 13 September. For overseas postal delivery, we strongly recommend booking tickets no later than Friday 4 September.

General Tickets

Early Booking Offer (available until Sunday 2 August)

Adult (16 years and over)	£24.75
Adult Two Days	£36
Child (5-15 years)	£9
Child Two Days	£13.05
Child (4 years or under)	free
Disabled Visitor (proof of disability allowance required)	£16.30
Disabled Visitor Two Days (proof of disability allowance required)	£23.70
Carer (one carer per disabled visitor)	free

Standard Advance Booking (available from Monday 3 August to Sunday 13 September)

Adult (16 years and over)	£27.50
Adult Two Days	£40
Child (5-15 years)	£18.15
Child Two Days	£26.40
Child (4 years or under)	free
Disabled Visitor (proof of disability allowance required)	£18.15
Disabled Visitor Two Days (proof of disability allowance required)	£26.40
Carer (one carer per disabled visitor)	free

Group Tickets

Group Adult	£23.35
Group Child	£15.40
Group Disabled	£15.40
Registered Tour Guide (one per group)	free

Group rates apply to groups of 10 or more paying visitors. Group tickets can only be booked by telephone, by calling 01223 499 353.

Member Tickets

Friends of Duxford Adult	£22
Friends of Duxford Adult Two Days	£32
Friends of Duxford Senior	£17.60
Friends of Duxford Senior Two Days	£25.60
Friends of Duxford Junior Ticket	£14.50

Member tickets for The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show can only be purchased in advance. When booking tickets for Junior members during the Early Booking Offer booking period (until Sunday 2 August), we advise members to purchase the general admission child ticket. When booking during the Standard Advance Booking period (Monday 3 August to Sunday 13 September), Junior members pay £14.50, a saving of 20% on the standard 'on the day' child ticket.

Premium passes for The Battle of Britain Anniversary Air Show

Offering you some of the best seats in the house, our Gold and Silver Pass enclosures are located right at the heart of the action. With their own entrance onto the flight line walk, our sumptuous marquees are fully-equipped with cash bars, refreshment points and luxury toilets.

When the flying starts, you can enjoy the air show from an exclusive flight line garden seating enclosure.

Silver Pass

Silver Pass is a great location for the day with activities for the children and a relaxed environment. You can purchase drinks and snacks over the counter or bring your packed lunch into our casual café-style seating area. Silver Pass is perfect for groups and families looking for an informal day.

Gold Pass

With an upgraded marquee and dining area, in Gold Pass you have the option of dining from our Gourmet Deli Bar, or bringing your own picnic. There will also be a light breakfast option available to purchase on arrival and an afternoon tea.

Please note that Gold Pass is not suitable for children under the age of 16.

The buffet lunch is only available by pre-booking. Premium pass tickets are only available by booking in advance. Enjoy discounted prices for children and families when you book before Monday 3 August.

Premium pass ticket prices

Early Booking offer for child and family tickets (available until Sunday 2 August)

Silver Pass Child	£20
Silver Pass Child Two Days	£35
Silver Pass Family (two adults and two children)	£120
Silver Pass Family Two Days (two adults and two children)	£230

Standard Advance Booking for child and family tickets (available from Monday 3 August to Sunday 13 September)

Silver Pass Child	£30
Silver Pass Child Two Days	£52.50
Silver Pass Family (two adults and two children)	£130
Silver Pass Family Two Days (two adults and two children)	£240

Adult passes (available until Sunday 13 September)

Silver Pass Adult	£55
Silver Pass Adult Two Days	£100
Gold Pass	£80
Gold Pass with lunch	£109
Gold Pass Two Days	£140
Gold Pass Two Days with lunch	£198
Gold Pass Group	£72.50
Gold Pass Group with lunch	£101.50

Group rates apply to groups of 10 or more paying visitors. Group tickets can only be booked by telephone, by calling 01223 499 353.

The easiest way to buy tickets is online at iwm.org.uk/duxford. You can also call our Box Office on 01223 499 353. The Box Office is open from 8am to 4.15pm, Monday to Thursday and from 8am to 4pm on Friday, excluding Bank Holidays and other public holidays.

Group tickets and Gold Pass group tickets can only be purchased by calling our Box Office.

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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iwm.org.uk / @I_W_M / www.facebook.com/iwm.london

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

