BATTLE OF BRITAIN SHOP
Located in the Visitor Centre the Battle of Britain shop offers unique items that have been carefully selected and designed to commemorate the Battle and those who fought in it.
Every purchase helps their stories to be retold.

HELP TELL THE STORIES THAT DESERVE TO BE HEARD
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The Battle of Britain was fought over the skies of southern England from July to October 1940. It became one of the major turning points of the Second World War. During the battle, several fighter squadrons flew out of the airfield here at Duxford.

Use this guide and your map to find objects and hidden features of Duxford from the time of the battle.

**CHAIN HOME RADAR VALVE**
**In AirSpace (Section B, upstairs)**

Chain Home was the British Radio Direction and Finding (RDF) system, or radar. The system used a series of tall receiver towers along the southeast coast of England that could detect German raids as soon as the aircraft took off from France. The information was relayed through Fighter Command to RAF stations, including Duxford. This valve (pictured) was one of the types which powered the system. At the time, it was a top-secret piece of technology.

**DIK YOU KNOW?**
In 1932, scientist Harold Wilkins discovered that radio signals could detect incoming aircraft. During the 1920s, some believed radio signals could be used as a ‘death ray’ to destroy aeroplanes. When the RAF asked Wilkins to look into the theory, he quickly established that it was nonsense!

**GUN BUTT**
**Between Hangars 2 & 3**

The machine guns on Duxford’s Spitfires and Hurricanes had to be accurate and effective in combat. To test this effectiveness, ground crew fired the guns into butts like this. The butt had 1-inch steel plates at the back and was filled with sand to absorb the force of the machine guns. This force was so strong that aircraft had to be propped up and tied down to steel rings in the concrete to prevent them from falling over when the guns fired.

**FIGHTER PEN**
**In front of Royal Anglian Regiment Memorial**

This fighter pen was built to protect RAF aircraft from bomb blasts during the Battle of Britain. Duxford’s fighter aircraft were dispersed around the perimeter of the airfield to allow pilots to get into the air quickly. Although twelve pens were built on the airfield, this is the only one still intact. Each pen could accommodate two aircraft, so 24 fighters (two squadrons) could be sheltered in total.

**DIK YOU KNOW?**
These structures were known as ‘E’ pens because of the dividing barrier that separated them into two sections. However, we do not know if any of Duxford’s pens were separated in this way.

**SUMERS AIR RAID SHELTER**
**Battle of Britain Hangar Entrance**

Duxford had many types of air raid shelters to protect those who lived and worked here. Named after the company that built it, this Summers shelter was one of four on the airfield. These large, underground shelters were semi-circular in shape and constructed of corrugated iron. This one had space for fifty people, so could have accommodated those who worked in the hangars maintaining aircraft.

**SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE MK1**
**In AirSpace (Conservation Hall)**

RAF Duxford was pivotal in the Battle of Britain. Get up close to our famous Supermarine Spitfire and imagine the RAF defending the skies during these key battles.

**DIK YOU KNOW?**
When Spitfires were introduced to RAF Duxford in 1938, the aircraft did not have any mirrors for looking behind them. When war was declared, the Commanding Officer of 611 Squadron decided to have car mirrors fitted onto his squadron’s Spitfires so they could see approaching Luftwaffe fighters!