

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY MUSEUM

As a result of the RAF expansion in 1936, concern was being expressed as to the vulnerability of airfields in the southern half of Britain. At this time it was the practice to fly new aircraft from the factories to the squadrons who would then be responsible for fitting armament and operational equipment which was not practical in time of war. The Air Ministry planned to establish Aircraft Storage Units (ASUs) in safer areas of the country and in 1938 it became evident that an airfield was to be built. The site chosen had been in use for light aircraft since about 1914 and in June 1940, 18 Maintenance Unit (18MU) was opened at Dumfries although no aircraft could fly in until anti invasion obstructions were removed. In July, 18MU became a tenant unit, and the station was turned over to No. 10 Bombing and Gunnery School from Warmwell in Dorset. By the end of the war, over 400 courses had been trained at Dumfries. The original unit, 18MU closed in 1957. During WWII, it is estimated that 18MU prepared and dispatched to units nearly 5,000 aircraft.

The museum has a well preserved control tower in which on the ground floor is a wide variety of engines including a Merlin and a Mamba (Gannet) with an RB211 outside. A set of linked portacabins portray airborne forces. The museum has an interesting selection of aircraft and if you are on the M5/M74 on the way to Scotland this museum is well worth a small detour.

Jetstream's were built in the mid 70s by British Aerospace at Prestwick, Scotland and XX483 started served in the RAF at the Central Flying School and No 5 Flying Training School after which it was transferred to the Navy at Culdrose. The aircraft was scrapped except for the cockpit section which was bought by the Museum in 2002.



The Saab Draken 16/40 (Serial Number 35075) is on long term loan from The Imperial War Museum, Duxford. This particular aircraft served with 16 Wing (Flygflottilj F16) of the Swedish Air force based at Uppsala between 1961 and 1976. The 16 Wing was disbanded in December 2003.

The Dassault MD-452 Mystere first flew on 23rd February 1951 and was a development of the MD-450 Ouragan. After further changes to the design the final models went into service – the MK-111N Night Fighter and the MK-1VA (displayed here) these aircraft served in squadrons of L' Armee De L' Air, and a number were exported for service with the air forces of Israel and India. The Mystere was flown for several years by the Patrouille de France aerobatic team.

CHARLES ROLLS COMMEMORATION AND TALK

Charles Rolls, co-founder of Rolls-Royce, died during the Bournemouth Centenary celebrations in 1910 at Britain's first International Aviation Meeting. A commemoration is held each year at the memorial plaque which is on the private playing fields of St Peter's School, Southbourne. This year the commemoration is on Sunday 12th July from 12.30 prompt to 1.15pm. In the afternoon at 2.15pm in the dining hall there will be a talk entitled 'Charles Rolls and Henry Royce' by Roger James the former Community Relations Manager at Rolls-Royce plc. See www.crmt.info for details or email contact is stephen.robson10@btopenworld.com.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN CONCERT

A Battle of Britain anniversary concert will take place in the Lyndhurst Community Centre at 6.30pm on Sunday 12th July. Music will be provided by the Downton Band, cheese and wine in the interval and tickets (£10) available in the Community Centre office.

LEPE COUNTRY PARK

New Forest Heritage Weekend Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th July, Lepe Country Park, Exbury, SO45 1AD.

Open 10.30am - 4pm. Entry Free.

Pilot a mini underwater vehicle, discover Lepe's WW2 role & delve into the Forest's past

Any newsletter contributions, ideas or comments to:

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