

RAF 100

The Royal Air Force 1918-2018

Sunday 1 April marked 100 years to the day since the Royal Air Force was formed. The award-winning RAF Museum in NW London hosted over 15,000 visitors across the weekend 1-2 April with a series of activities and events to mark this historic event.

Visitors to the Museum were treated to theatre, family activities and a special appearance from the RAF Baton Relay team.

The Front of House Theatre Company (illustrated) breathed life into some of the amazing stories set among the Museum's First World War exhibition. Visitors were able to talk to and interact with actors in character representing the voices of the men and women that are part of the RAF Story.

At the close of the day, serving RAF personnel carried the RAF100 Baton into the Museum grounds. The Baton is being carried across the country and around the world, visiting 100 locations in 100 days. The relay started on Sunday (1 April) in central London and the team of RAF runners were met at the Museum by the Museum's CEO Maggie Appleton who ran the last leg of the relay with the team.

She said: 'It is an absolute honour to be part of the RAF100 celebrations and commemorations and share in the first part of the RAF Baton Relay Team's journey. I would like to thank all the visitors who came to the Museum across the weekend and look forward to welcoming them all back at the end of June to enjoy our transformed site when we will have three new exciting exhibitions.'

The RAF Museum's RAF Centenary Programme

The RAF Museum's RAF Centenary Programme is a multi-million-pound transformation of the RAF Museum's London home and will welcome visitors to discover a new green heart of the community in Colindale, North West London, (NW9 5LL) reflecting the historic RAF Hendon airfield. The newly landscaped site includes outdoor picnic areas, children's playground, restaurant, visitor car parking, and fully accessible pathways.

Two new, innovative galleries will explore the first 100 years of the RAF, its roles today and invite visitors to imagine its future contribution and technology. A third new exhibition will focus on the story of the RAF from the Falklands Conflict of the early 1980s to current operations.

Each exhibition will represent the diversity and inclusivity of the Royal Air Force and focus on the people behind the blue uniforms. Over 500 previously unseen artefacts relating to RAF history will be on display including logbooks, uniforms, lucky charms and technical equipment. These items have been carefully selected by Museum curators for their ability to engage visitors with a fresh perspective on the RAF story.

The Museum is also launching RAF Stories – an online digital project which will invite everyone to share their own stories, not just former and serving personnel, but also friends and family as well as partners who work closely with the RAF. RAF Stories is a global effort to uncover tales ranging from humour to heroism.

The newly developed exhibitions will open at the end of June 2018 as part of the wider calendar of RAF 100 events celebrating and commemorating the RAF's Centenary across the country.

Special events

The Museum is also running a series of special public events to mark the RAF Centenary across both its sites including a Spitfire 10k run; Open Cockpit evenings and family events such as the Hendon Pageant and the Family Festival of Flight.

The RAF Museum's RAF Centenary Programme is supported by National Lottery Players through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

For more information about the RAF Museum's RAF Centenary Programme readers are invited to visit www.rafmuseum.org