

## **Royal Aero Club Awards**

The 2010 Royal Aero Club Awards ceremony will be held at the RAF Museum, Hendon on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April. This prestigious event will celebrate the achievements of UK aviators and behind-the-scenes workers from all branches of sport flying. Held in the midst of the historic collection at Hendon, the awards will be presented by the Club's President, HRH the Duke of York.

Amongst the award winners will be Captain Paul Bonhomme who, in 2009, became the first British pilot to win the Red Bull Air Race World Championship and David Hempleman-Adams who last year added two new world balloon records to his already impressive list of achievements. They will receive the Royal Aero Club Britannia Trophy and Silver Medal respectively.

Two British teams who brought gold back to the UK will also receive awards. The Freestyle Team Volare, comprising Mike Carpenter, Adam Mattacola and Alberto Fuertes will be presented with the Royal Aero Club Gold Medal in recognition of their victory in both the World and European Freestyle Skydiving Championships.

The British Gliding Team, receive the Prince of Wales Cup after winning the team trophy at the European Gliding Championships and bringing home two individual gold medals – Russell Cheetham in the 18m class and Pete Harvey in the open class. The team is currently ranked number two in the world.

David Roberts, Chairman of the Royal Aero Club, said: "The list of achievers demonstrates just how pre-eminent the UK is in sporting aviation. After holding this event in central London for many years, we hope that the new venue at the RAF Museum will encourage aviation enthusiasts from all disciplines will come along to help us celebrate our winners' achievements."

Guests will have the opportunity to look round the RAF Museum prior to the Awards Ceremony and early booking is advised.

More information about the event and details of how to book tickets can be found on the Royal Aero Club web site at [www.royalaeroclub.org](http://www.royalaeroclub.org) or contact the Royal Aero Club on 0116 2440182



E Robert Dunthorn	Nominated by BHPA
Helen Evans	Nominated by BGA
David Wise	Nominated by LAA & RAeC
Roger Morrisroe	Nominated by BGA

**Old & Bold Trophy**

Derry Moore	Nominated by BBAC
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**Nexus Aviation Journalist of the Year**

Brian Hope	Nominated by LAA
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**Certificate of Appreciation**

RAF Museum	Nominated by RAeC Trust
Charles Crawley	Nominated by RAeC Trust
Hayward Aviation Ltd	Nominated by HCGB
Graeme Fudge – Mazda UK	Nominated by BAeA

**Companion of the RAeC**

Peter Cruddas	Nominated by RAeC Trust
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**Ann Welch Memorial Award**

Mark Dann	Nominated by BHPA
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## Royal Air Force Museum Hendon

Whilst Her Majesty the Queen opened the Royal Air Force Museum London in November 1972, Hendon's aviation roots reach back to 1910 when a young entrepreneur by the name of Claude Grahame-White purchased 207 acres of land on which to build an aerodrome. The site soon flourished with many flying schools and aircraft manufacturers setting up shop on the aerodrome. Keen to ignite interest in aviation among the people of Britain, Grahame-White and his business partner, Richard Gates, initiated weekly flying displays at Hendon. These displays attracted well-known pilots from around the world, as well as the cream of British high society. Hendon became a centre for British aviation and its displays were social events to rival Ascot and Henley.

In 1914, the thriving aerodrome was requisitioned for Home Defence during the First World War. Hendon became a Royal Naval Air Station, training new pilots in the flying schools on site. The aerodrome, with its large grass airfield, was also a test ground for aircraft produced locally. The aircraft factories here produced over 8,000 aircraft for the flying services – 1/7<sup>th</sup> of all those produced in Britain. At the end of the First World War, the aviation industry declined and the factories and flying schools at Hendon gradually closed down.

Nevertheless, the aerodrome remained a focal point for aviation as the Royal Air Force staged their spectacular annual air displays at Hendon between 1921 and 1937. These aerial pageants brought the RAF to the public, showcasing the latest aircraft as well as the flying talents of the RAF pilots. At its peak, in 1937, the annual display attracted over 200,000 spectators.

In 1939, the outbreak of war saw Hendon once again become an operational RAF station, home to No. 24 Transport and Communications Squadron. RAF Hendon also served briefly as a fighter station during the Battle of Britain. It was from here that Sergeant Ray Holmes, of No. 504 Squadron, famously took off to bring down the 'Buckingham Palace Bomber'. Post-war, the proximity of the site to London ensured its survival as a personnel transport station. Hendon's doors were once again opened to the public for station open days and from the mid 1950s the site gave air experience to Air Training Corps units. The station also continued the handling of VIP movements and diplomatic flights, a function which has now transferred to RAF Northolt, whose traffic frequently overflies the Museum.

The last flight to Hendon by a fixed-wing aircraft took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 1968, when the last operational Blackburn Beverley was delivered to the Museum prior to its Royal opening in 1972. Soon afterwards, the runways were removed to make way for the Grahame Park Housing Estate. The official closure of RAF Hendon took place on 1 April 1987.

Today, the RAF Museum keeps the spirit of aviation alive on this historic site. With the old aircraft hangars at their core, the exhibition halls display over 100 aircraft and numerous exhibits, preserving the traditions of the RAF and 100 years of aviation history.

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