

Welcome to something new for *Aeroplane*: our guide to the UK's burgeoning vintage aircraft flight experiences scene. Listed inside are the different operators of passenger flights in historic aeroplanes, from trial lessons in light trainers to rides in Spitfires and Mustangs. This rapidly expanding industry shows no signs of slowing down — at one end of the spectrum, there have probably never been more chances to go flying in a Tiger Moth; at the other, the Safety

Standards Acknowledgement and Consent (SSAC) rules brought in a few years ago by the Civil Aviation Authority have permitted paid rides in types that were previously out of reach, and that range is still expanding. So, if you want to go flying in a piece of aviation heritage, there's probably never been a better time.

NOTE: This information has been compiled from a variety of sources. *Aeroplane* accepts no responsibility for any errors that thus arise. Readers are advised to contact or otherwise check with operators for the latest details.



Aerial Collective uses these two well-known P-51Ds, *Miss Helen* and 'the Shark'. RICHARD PAVER

AERIAL COLLECTIVE

LOCATION: IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire

AIRCRAFT: Bristol Blenheim IF, Hawker Sea Fury T20, North American P-51D Mustang, Supermarine Spitfire IX Trainer, Westland Lysander IIIa

This new, and very exciting, entrant into the historic aircraft flight experiences market is closely associated with the Aircraft Restoration Company and operates from its facilities at IWM

Duxford. It carried out its first passenger ride on 18 January this year, using Shaun Patrick's RAF-schemed P-51D Mustang 'KH774'/G-SHWN, better known as 'the Shark' on account of its No 112 Squadron, RAF 'sharkmouth' markings. This aircraft, Robert Tyrrell's USAAF-schemed P-51D G-BIXL *Miss Helen*, and the ARC-operated pair of two-seat Spitfire IXTs, PV202 and PT462, form the core of the fleet as far as customer flights are concerned.

John Romain flying the recently restored Lysander IIIa V9312, in which Aerial Collective hopes to offer a limited number of passenger flights.

GEORGE ROMAIN



Plans are under way for Aerial Collective to undertake paying flights in the ARC's Blenheim IF.
 GEORGE ROMAIN



Towards the end of February, a further two-seat fighter was added to the roster, when approval was given by the CAA for passenger rides in Sea Fury T20 WG655 *Invincible*, also owned by Shaun Patrick. The Pratt & Whitney R-2800-powered beast thus becomes the first example of the Hawker naval fighter to operate such flights under the SSAC

“This very exciting entrant into the market is closely associated with the Aircraft Restoration Company”

regulations. Whether in the Spitfires, Mustangs or Sea Fury, 30 or 50-minute flights are available, including the opportunity for the passenger to take the controls at the pilot's discretion, and the option to fly aerobatics. Still rarer machinery will hopefully join the line-up in due course. “We're currently working with the CAA on hopefully bringing the

Lysander and the Blenheim into our offering”, says Aerial Collective's Hannah Juggins, “and there's another couple that we're working on”. Details of the Lysander and Blenheim flights are still to be confirmed as discussions continue, but will be publicised when available.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:

Telephone 01223 653830, www.aerialcollective.co.uk



Sea Fury T20 WG655 will be operating customer rides for the first time this year. GEORGE ROMAIN



Aero Legends' Spitfire HFIX, TD314, on a flight near the white cliffs of Dover with Devon VP981. RICHARD PAVER

AERO LEGENDS

LOCATIONS: Headcorn, Kent and Sywell, Northamptonshire

AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth, de Havilland Devon C2, North American T-6G Texan, Supermarine Spitfire HFIX and IX Trainer

This very busy, forward-looking company has steadily expanded its operation since being established by Keith Perkins a few years ago. While its main base is still at Headcorn, a full range of flight experiences is also offered from Sywell. Aero Legends says its mission is to provide "the opportunity to relive the flight training and flying experiences of wartime pilots using authentically restored aircraft of that era", and to that end it makes available trial lessons in two of the main Allied training types from World War Two — the Tiger Moth, in the form of K4259/G-ANDE and G-PWBE, and the bright yellow T-6G Texan, 49-2309/G-DDMV — as well as flights in two-seat Spitfires, comprising the recently rebuilt IXT NH341 *Elizabeth* and the Aircraft Restoration Company's PV202.

Single-seat Spitfire IX TD314 operates the 'Fly with a Spitfire' trips, on which it flies alongside Devon C2 VP981/G-DHDV. Aero Legends offers several different experiences of this type: flying around Leeds Castle or the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne, the white



On board the Devon, currently the only example of the DH104 offering passenger flights in the UK. RICHARD PAVER



Classics from the Aero Legends fleet in formation: T-6G Texan G-DDMV and Devon C2 VP981/G-DHDV. RICHARD PAVER



The two Aero Legends Spitfires, IXT NH341 and HFIX TD314, in the hands of Martin Overall and Antony Parkinson. RICHARD PAVER

cliffs of Dover, or Eyebrook Reservoir in Leicestershire, used by No 617 Squadron as a practice location for the Möhne Dam raid. The ex-Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Devon is an excellent platform for these formation flights, its large windows affording good photographic opportunities — something that comes into its own on the fighter duo formation

sorties. Back on the ground, customers have the chance to sit in the 'Spit'. The Devon gives pleasure flights of its own, over Leeds Castle and London.

"The Devon is an excellent platform for formation flights with its large windows"

These aircraft aside, Aero Legends also operates D-Day veteran C-47A Skytrain *Drag-em-oot*, which makes regular round canopy parachute drops, Prentice T1 VR259 and Thruyton Jackaroo G-AOIR.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01622 812830, www.aerolegends.co.uk



Air Freedom's newly restored N2S-3, resplendent in period US Navy markings. VIA GARETH BLISS

AIR FREEDOM

LOCATION: Enstone, Oxfordshire
AIRCRAFT: Boeing Stearman N2S-3

A family business, Air Freedom is a newcomer to the scene — its 1941-vintage ex-US Navy N2S-3, BuNo 4280, only made its maiden post-restoration flight on 26 November last year. Half-hour flights take in Warwick Castle, 45-minute trips Warwick Castle and Blenheim Palace, and the hour-long rides both of those locations plus Bliss Mill near Chipping Norton. Those times are from take-off to touchdown rather than chock-to-chock, and you can take the controls if you wish. Discounts are always given to service personnel past and present; there will also be special offers on certain occasions, such as Father's and Mother's Days, and it is planned to arrange 1940s' days with re-enactors, period vehicles and entertainers. Heading up the operation is flying instructor Gareth Bliss, who often co-pilots Plane Sailing's Catalina at airshows.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 07388 248171, airfreedom.co.uk



The unique Spitfire VIII Trainer, MT818, leads IXT MJ627 in this Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar two-ship. RICHARD PAVER

BIGGIN HILL HERITAGE HANGAR

LOCATION: London Biggin Hill Airport, Kent

AIRCRAFT: Supermarine Spitfire VIII Trainer, IX and IX Trainer

The illustrious former fighter station in Kent is now one of Britain's foremost centres of Spitfire activity, and the programme of customer rides offered by the Heritage Hangar is a big part of that. This year it will be able to offer flights in three different examples: fleet stalwart IXT MJ627, and unique two-seat MkVIII MT818, will be joined by newly restored IXT MJ772, which returned to the air towards the end of February. Both of the MkIXs are D-Day combat veterans, and wear invasion stripes in this 75th anniversary year of the Normandy landings, while MJ772 will take part in June's commemorations. The MkVIII, meanwhile, is the only Spitfire prototype of any sort to still be flying — it was the original prototype two-seat trainer, converted post-war by Supermarine.

There are three different Spitfire rides to choose from: the half-hour Weald of Kent Experience, the 45-minute Beachy Head Experience, and the hour-long White Cliffs and Capel Experience. In addition, it is possible to fly alongside a Spitfire in a high-wing GippsAero GA8 Airvan.

the Heritage Hangar's public relations man Robin Brooks, "If a client is flying in the two-seat Spitfire then the Airvan option to fly alongside for four people is £395 (whole aircraft, not per person). We also offer individual seats for Fly with a Spitfire where you can ride in the Airvan alongside a single-seat Spitfire for £399 per person". The single-seat Spitfire in question is HFIX TA805.

With the opportunity to view the other aircraft in the Heritage Hangar's much-expanded facilities, including numerous Spitfire restoration projects (see *Aeroplane* February 2019), a very wide-ranging Spitfire experience is offered at Biggin Hill.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:

Telephone 01959 576767, flyaspitfire.com



Spitfire HFIX TA805 Spirit of Kent operating a Fly with a Spitfire sortie from Biggin Hill with the Heritage Hangar's Airvan. RICHARD PAVER

BOULTBEE FLIGHT ACADEMY

LOCATIONS: Goodwood, West Sussex and Solent Airport, Hampshire
AIRCRAFT: Supermarine Spitfire IX and IX Trainer

The UK's pioneering operator of Spitfire flight experiences and provider of training on the Supermarine fighter continues to mount an extensive passenger ride programme using its MkIXT, SM520. From its main base at Goodwood in June and July, Boulton puts on half-hour flights over the Channel and 50-minute sorties to the white cliffs of Dover; both are also offered as two-ship trips with Martin Phillips' single-seat MkIX, RR232, giving the opportunity to experience a variety of formations and tailchasing. An HA-1112-M1L Buchón can be added in to give an even more authentic feel of air combat. From Solent Airport

— formerly HMS *Daedalus*, RNAS Lee-on-Solent — from April to May and August to November there are half-hour solo and formation flights out to the Needles, naturally taking in the white cliffs, and a 50-minute single-aircraft trip.

"Boulton's new Spitfire simulator aims to offer the closest thing to a Spitfire flight without actually leaving the ground"

In addition to the passenger flights and this year's round-the-world flight in the IWC-sponsored 'Silver Spitfire', MkIX MJ271, Boulton is launching a new Spitfire simulator at Goodwood. Making use of original wartime MkIX parts and very advanced simulation technology, it aims to offer the closest thing to a Spitfire flight without actually leaving the ground.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:

Telephone 01243 531147,
www.boultonflightacademy.co.uk



Spitfire IXT SM520 of the Boulton Flight Academy. TONY CLARKE



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BROOKLANDS FLYING CLUB

LOCATION: Sywell, Northamptonshire
AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A
 Tiger Moth

Rarely in the long history of Sywell Aerodrome has there not been a Tiger Moth based there. The connection between airfield and aircraft dates back to the 1930s — in fact, to 1934, when no less a figure than Amy Johnson made a visit in one of de Havilland's demonstrator examples. The following year, Brooklands Aviation opened No 6 Elementary and Reserve Flying School there with a fleet of Tigers, and it continued to train many RAF, RAF Volunteer Reserve and overseas pilots from Sywell right through wartime, not relinquishing the type until 1951. The Brooklands Flying Club perpetuates that link by offering pleasure flights in the type. They last 30, 40 or 60 minutes, and use RAF-marked, yellow-liveried example R5172/G-AOIS.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01604 491112, www.flybrooklands.com or sywellaerodrome.co.uk



A veteran of the 'Phoney War' in France, Tiger Moth G-AOEI is a Cambridge Flying Group stalwart. BEN DUNNELL

Tiger Moth R5172/
G-AOIS is operated
by the Sywell-based
Brooklands Flying Club.
DAVID WHITWORTH



CAMBRIDGE FLYING GROUP

LOCATION: Cambridge Airport,
Cambridgeshire

AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A
Tiger Moth

Best-known for its many years of providing ab initio instruction on Tiger Moths, the Cambridge Flying Group also offers half-hour trial lessons, in which you are able to take the controls of the biplane trainer, and introductory flights, where you just go along for the ride. All are carried out with one of the group's seasoned instructors. The two Tigers are the same

examples as have formed the CFG fleet for many years: G-AHIZ and G-AOEI, the latter being especially historically notable as a 1939-vintage example that served with No 81 Squadron, RAF in France prior to the Dunkirk evacuation. Who knows — like many before you, a trial lesson might lead to your being bitten by the bug, and deciding to start flying training on the Cambridge-based Tigers.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:

www.cambridgeflyinggroup.co.uk

“Like many before you, a trial lesson might lead to your being bitten by the bug, and deciding to start flying training on the Cambridge-based Tigers”

The Classic Wings fleet of Tiger Moths and Dragon Rapides lined up on the Duxford flightline. DAVID WHITWORTH



CLASSIC WINGS

LOCATION: IWM Duxford, Cambridgeshire

AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth, de Havilland DH89A Dragon Rapide, Noorduyn Harvard IIb, Supermarine Spitfire IX Trainer

Classic Wings has now been operating pleasure flights from IWM Duxford for nearly three decades. It continues to fly Tiger Moth trial lessons and Dragon Rapide sightseeing trips over Cambridge, Ely, Newmarket and London, as it has for so long, but these are now augmented by a very wide range of other experiences. The 'de Havilland Double'

package features consecutive flights in the two DH classics, each of them lasting about a quarter of an hour. And, notably, there's a variety of 'Wing-to-Wing' flights: Rapide with Spitfire (generally the Imperial War Museums-owned Mk1a, N3200),

"It continues to fly Tiger Moth trial lessons and Dragon Rapide sightseeing trips, but these are augmented by a wide range of other experiences"

Rapide with Spitfire and Hurricane or Spitfire and Buchón, or the ex-Royal Canadian Air Force Harvard joined in formation with the same combinations of multiple fighters.

With four Tigers, three Rapides and the Harvard on strength, Classic Wings operates throughout the week from March to October. Flights of different duration are available in each type — and this goes

for the Spitfire, too. Classic Wings uses a MkIXT for this purpose, with sorties of 30 and 50 minutes on offer. And for those of suitable means — and ability — wishing to take things still further, there is a full pilot training programme, which can

take the student from taildragger conversion through to flying the Spitfire.

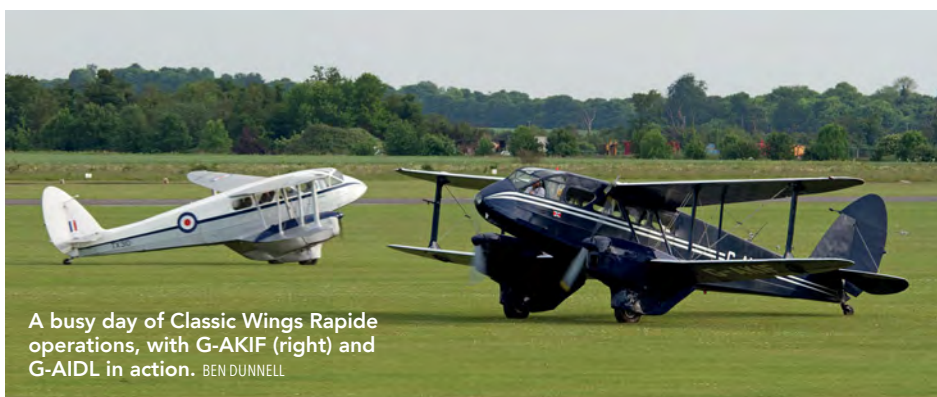
PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01223 837453, www.classic-wings.co.uk



One of Britain's quintessential pleasure flying experiences: airborne in a Classic Wings Rapide. RICHARD PAVER



ABOVE: Spitfire IX PT462 about to operate a Classic Wings flight.
DAVID WHITWORTH



A busy day of Classic Wings Rapide operations, with G-AKIF (right) and G-AIDL in action. BEN DUNNELL



The IWM's Spitfire Ia N3200 eases alongside Classic Wings' Rapide TX310/G-AIDL. RICHARD PAVER

SNJ-5 G-DHHF runs in for a flypast at the end of a passenger flight at Compton Abbas. HOWARD J. CURTIS



COMPTON ABBAS AIRFIELD

LOCATION: Compton Abbas, Dorset
AIRCRAFT: Boeing Stearman PT-13D Kaydet, de Havilland Canada Chipmunk T10, North American SNJ-5

Compton Abbas is a very picturesque place from which to take a flight in a vintage aeroplane. The based operator, DH Heritage Flights, offers rides in three

classic trainers: its PT-13D Kaydet, SNJ-5 and Chipmunk. Trips last between 20 and 60 minutes, taking in many local landmarks and, naturally, the chance to sample the controls if you so desire. Available too is the Military Flying Training Day, where you fly in the Chipmunk during the morning and step up later to the SNJ; this includes lunch for two

between flights, and champagne at the day's conclusion. It should also be mentioned that airborne experiences in a range of modern light aircraft are available from Compton Abbas as well.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01747 811767, www.comptonabbasairfield.co.uk



Chipmunk T10 WK585 about to depart from Compton Abbas. HOWARD J. CURTIS

The very fine pair of
Finest Hour Tiger Moths
airborne above Bicester
Heritage. VIA CHRIS THOMPSON



FINEST HOUR EXPERIENCES

LOCATIONS: Bicester, Oxfordshire and Cotswold Airport, Gloucestershire
AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth, de Havilland Canada Chipmunk T10

At Bicester, Finest Hour Experiences has a lovely location from which to fly its pair of RAF-camouflaged Tiger Moths, T7109/ G-AOIM and DE971/G-OOSY. "We are very pleased", says Finest Hour chief pilot Chris Thompson, "to have been selected by Bicester Heritage as its chosen heritage and aerobatic aeroplane operator". The core activity is hands-on trial lessons in the two Tigers, all with professional pilots who are qualified aerobatic instructors — indeed, aerobatics can be included in your sortie if you so wish. Different flight experiences include tours of locations used in *Inspector Morse* and *Midsomer Murders*, aviation heritage tours overflying Bomber Command training airfields situated in the vicinity, Tiger Moth formation flights, and many more. At the more modern end of the spectrum, there are aerobatic experiences in the sublime CAP 10. Aside from the main base at Bicester, operations will be

mounted from Cotswold Airport (Kemble) during this summer.

Around mid-year, a third Tiger is due to join the fleet after restoration; by then, "in a couple of months' time", says Chris, the line-up will also have been augmented by a very historic Chipmunk. This is WB549/ G-BAPB, the first British-built example,

which debuted at Farnborough 70 years ago. "Our longer-term plans", says Chris, "are to move into larger and heavier aeroplanes". Watch this space...

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 07415 735683, www.finesthourexperiences.co.uk



Finest Hour's Tiger Moth T7109/ G-AOIM served in wartime with Nos 19 and 24 Elementary Flying Training Schools. VIA CHRIS THOMPSON

GOODWOOD FLYING SCHOOL

LOCATION: Goodwood, West Sussex
AIRCRAFT: Boeing Stearman N2S-3

Last year, the Goodwood Flying School in West Sussex launched two new historic flying experiences with its recently acquired, 1943-vintage, ex-US Navy Boeing Stearman N2S-3. The Stearman Aviation Experience involves 40 minutes in the aeroplane, including half an hour over the Sussex coastline and countryside. The Stearman Fly & Dine experience

provides 50 minutes in the aircraft, with a flight time of 40 minutes, followed by a champagne lunch for two at the members-only clubhouse, The Kennels. In both cases there is informal tuition on the basics of flying the Stearman and the chance to plan a personalised route. Aerobatic manoeuvres can be flown if you wish.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01243 755066, www.goodwood.com



The Goodwood-based N2S-3 on a very scenic flight over the Sussex countryside. MIKE CALDWELL



MSS HOLDINGS

LOCATION: Wesham, Lancashire
AIRCRAFT: Bell UH-1H Iroquois

The very welcome news came last summer that the CAA had given approval to MSS Holdings for passenger ride operations under the SSAC rules in its Bell UH-1H Iroquois, a US Army veteran of the Vietnam War. It thus became the first helicopter and the first turbine-powered aircraft to be permitted to undertake such flights. Details of when the 'Huey' will begin customer rides are yet to be confirmed; check the operator's website for further details.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:
 Telephone 01772 687775, www.huey.co.uk



MSS Holdings' Vietnam veteran Bell UH-1H will be a very exciting addition to the roster of ex-military aircraft available for customer flights. BEN DUNNELL

PERRY AIR

LOCATION: Shoreham Airport,
West Sussex

AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A
Tiger Moth, Piper PA-18-90 Super
Cub, Stampe SV4C

Apart from several modern light aircraft, Perry Air gives trial lessons from Shoreham in three historic

machines. The Tiger Moth, G-AMNN *Spirit of Pashley*, is the airport's oldest based aeroplane; after many years as a ground instructional airframe at Northbrook College it was restored by them to fly. An interesting contrast comes in the form of the Gipsy Major-powered Stampe. Flights of varying lengths are available, and

aerobatics in the Tiger and Stampe can be added for a small extra cost. The Tiger is also available for taildragger conversion.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:

Telephone 01273 463081,
www.perryair.co.uk



Perry Air's Tiger Moth G-AMNN *Spirit of Pashley* rolls for take-off from Shoreham, with the chapel of Lancing College as the characteristic backdrop. BEN DUNNELL

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T-6 HARVARD AVIATION

LOCATIONS: *Conington, Cambridgeshire and Eshott, Northumberland*
AIRCRAFT: *CCF Harvard IV*

This very distinctive Canadian-built Harvard, painted in wartime RAF desert camouflage with the name *Wacky Wabbit*, is based at Duxford but operates experience flights out of Conington near Peterborough and Eshott in Northumberland. A list of dates for 2019 can be found on the operator's website. Andy Goodall from T-6 Harvard Aviation reports that two more locations may be added to the list soon. Furthermore, says Andy, the aircraft is available for conversion training. "We are currently training the owners of a Spitfire and a Hurricane", he says, "so they can go solo at some point."

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: www.t6harvard.com



N2S-4 G-BTFG of TG Aviation operating from Pent Farm. VIA SUE GIRDLER



T-6 Harvard Aviation's Harvard IV G-BJST *Wacky Wabbit* is a notably distinctive example. BEN DUNNELL

TG AVIATION

LOCATION: *Pent Farm, Kent*
AIRCRAFT: *Boeing Stearman N2S-4*

Long-time Manston-based flying school operator TG Aviation now offers flights from Pent Farm near Hythe with its wartime-vintage ex-US Navy Stearman. Half-hour trial flight trips generally take in the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne, while hour-long flights allow the chance to overfly more of Kent. TG Aviation's Sue Girdler says all flights are carried out with an instructor, allowing them to count towards PPL training if required. Operations for the 2019 season will recommence during April.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:
 Telephone 01843 823656 or 07511 526529, www.tg-aviation.com

"Half-hour trips generally take in the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne, while hour-long flights allow the chance to overfly more of Kent"



The Tiger Club's Tiger Moth G-ASKP at Damyns Hall.
 PAUL CARPENTER

THE TIGER CLUB

LOCATION: *Damyns Hall, Essex*
AIRCRAFT: *de Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth*

The illustrious Tiger Club has introduced countless people to flying 'as it should be' — open-cockpit and taildragger — down the decades. It now has an excellent new home at Damyns Hall, and offers air experience flights in its two Tiger Moths, G-ACDC (in the club's ownership since the 1950s) and G-ASKP.

These last 20, 30 or 40 minutes. Also on offer are aerobatic experiences in a CAP 10. Tailwheel training is undertaken on the Tigers and a Piper Super Cub for those wishing to add to their flying repertoire — and then, who knows where involvement with the Tiger Club may lead you?

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01708 524633, www.tigerclub.co.uk

TIGER MOTH FLIGHT EXPERIENCE

LOCATION: *Sherburn-in-Elmet,
Yorkshire*

AIRCRAFT: *de Havilland DH82A
Tiger Moth*

The Tiger Moth used for these flights, G-ALUC, is distinctive in its appearance — it wears the roundel of the RAF Benevolent Fund, because the so-called Tiger Moth Squadron raises funds for that charity through its operations. Half-hour and hour-long trips are offered, flights being undertaken daily from April to September inclusive. All are carried out from the historic airfield at Sherburn-in-Elmet near Leeds.

PRICES, BOOKING AND

INFORMATION: *Telephone 0800 085
0196, www.tigermothexperience.co.uk*

Tiger Moth G-ALUC on approach to land.

SUSAN AND ALLAN PARKER/ALAMY



Tiger Moth G-ALUC wearing the
RAF Benevolent Fund roundel.

CHRIS PROCTER/AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM

Tiger Moth Training's immaculate trio of DH82As, all in wartime camouflage. VIA KEVIN CRUMPLIN



TIGER MOTH TRAINING

LOCATION: Henstridge, Somerset
AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A
Tiger Moth

Three beautifully restored Tiger Moths, all returned to their original wartime camouflage schemes, form this operator's fleet. Tiger Moth Training was set up as a professional training organisation, providing instruction on the famous biplane. Mostly this takes the form of tailwheel conversion training for pilots who already hold PPLs, though it has trained a small number of ab initio students. However, founder Kevin Crumplin says that pleasure flights, in the form of trial lessons which require the buyer to become a temporary member of the training facility, have become the

biggest part of the business. These can involve anything from one to all three of the Tigers, and last between 20 minutes and an hour. "When we started", Crumplin says, "it tended to be singletons, but we now find that more people want to do formations, with family members and friends". The Blackmore Vale area in which Henstridge is situated provides some delightful landscapes over which to enjoy an open-cockpit trip. Those having the trial lesson are, of course, encouraged to take the controls, and can have the flight count towards a PPL if they wish.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:
www.tigermothtraining.co.uk

The Grace Spitfire, IXT ML407, is among the UK's best-loved warbirds. RICHARD PAVER



Ultimate Warbird Flights plans to offer trips in T-28S Fennec G-TROY before too long. DAVID WHITWORTH



Ultimate Warbird Flights two-seat fighter trio: Spitfire, Mustang and Buchón. AIR LEASING



Pete Kynsey taxiing at Sywell after a sortie in the two-seat Buchón. DAVID WHITWORTH



Twin-stick Buchón chases twin-stick Spitfire across the Northamptonshire countryside. THE BLADES

ULTIMATE WARBIRD FLIGHTS

LOCATION: *Sywell, Northamptonshire*
AIRCRAFT: *Hispano HA-1112-M4L Buchón, North American TF-51D Mustang, Supermarine Spitfire IX Trainer*

Thanks to the activities of Air Leasing, Sywell aerodrome has become one of the UK's leading warbird locations, and its Ultimate Warbird Flights business is a big part of that. Its fleet includes three truly legendary machines: Spitfire IXT ML407, otherwise known as the 'Grace Spitfire', TF-51D Mustang *Contrary Mary*, and HA-1112-M4L Buchón 'Red 11'. They respectively represent a decorated D-Day combat veteran, the only dual-control Mustang in the UK, and the sole remaining two-seat example of the Spanish-built, Merlin-engined Messerschmitt Bf 109 — a *Battle of Britain* film veteran to boot.

Most flights involve an individual fighter, a total 35-minute experience including 25 minutes of flight time, and the chance to sample aerobatics and combat manoeuvres. It is possible to take the

controls of the Spitfire, Buchón and Mustang under the pilot's guidance. However, as Ultimate Warbird Flights' Richard Grace says, "We're able to fly them together, which is particularly nice". Only recently, he reports, the company has sold its first so-called 'Battle over Britain' experience, "where three people can go up, one in each aeroplane, and have a jolly good time in a three-ship doing all the stuff that we get the pleasure of doing most weekends at airshows."

The fighter trio aside, Ultimate Warbird Flights hopes to add North American T-28S Fennec

G-TROY, recently acquired by Air Leasing, to the passenger flights line-up in 2019. "We're yet to have the final nod from the CAA", says Richard, but he sees no reason for this not to be forthcoming. The company will also be offering Tiger Moth flights in examples already based at Sywell.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION:

Telephone 01604 642058, ultimatewarbirdflights.com

Vintage Flying's Tiger Moths, G-ADPC and R5136/G-APAP, near the Derwent Dam on their 'Dambusters Run'. IAN BRACEGIRDLE





Tiger Moth DE992/G-AXXV operates flights from White Waltham. JOHN DUNNELL

WEST LONDON AERO CLUB

LOCATION: White Waltham, Berkshire

AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth, de Havilland Canada Chipmunk T10, North American SNJ-5, Piper PA-18 Super Cub

One of the UK's great centres of general aviation, it is no surprise to find flight experiences in vintage taildraggers being offered from the grass expanses of White Waltham. Trial lessons are flown in the Tiger Moth — the specific example being former RAF Phantom pilot Robin Russell's 1943-vintage, camouflaged ex-RAF and French Air Force aircraft DE992/G-AXXV, a regular member of the Tiger Nine display team — Chipmunk and Super Cub, while it is hoped to have the SNJ-5 back on line soon. There are also experiences in more recent aeroplanes, including aerobatics in a Pitts Special.

In addition to this, the Tiger Moth is available for pilot training courses for both qualified and student pilots, thus perpetuating the grand tradition of training on Tigers at White Waltham that began with the de Havilland School of Flying in 1935.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01628 823272, www.wlac.co.uk



DE992 is a regular airshow participant with the Tiger Nine display team. STEVE FLINT/AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM

VINTAGE FLYING

LOCATION: Egginton, Derbyshire

AIRCRAFT: de Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth

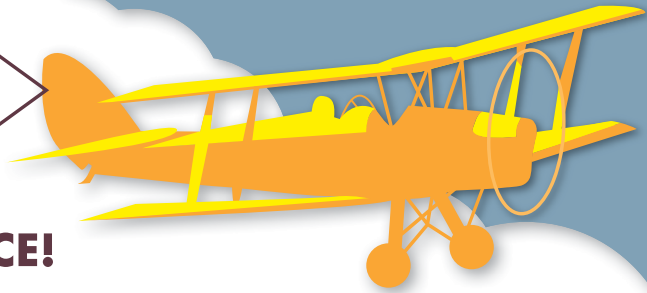
With a pair of Tiger Moths, G-ADPC and R5136/G-APAP, Vintage Flying carries out pleasure flights from Egginton near Derby, covering scenic areas of Derbyshire and Staffordshire. The highlight is the 'Dambuster Run', through the lowlands of south Derbyshire and up into the beautiful Peak District, taking in locations used in the run-up to No 617 Squadron's Ruhr dams raid such as the Derwent, Ladybower and Howden dams. You can take the controls for a time at the instructor's discretion. Operations manager Jamie Darlington-Walters says a third Tiger currently under restoration will join the fleet soon.

PRICES, BOOKING AND INFORMATION: Telephone 01283 585803, vintageflying.co.uk

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