

# Institute of Physics – London & South East Branch – Retired Members Section

## Visit the de Havilland Aircraft Museum on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022

This visit has been organised by John Belling.

### Description

**Captain Sir Geoffrey de Havilland** (1882 – 1965) was an English aviation pioneer and aerospace engineer.



The aircraft company he founded produced the **Mosquito**, which has been considered the most versatile warplane ever built and his **Comet** was the first jet airliner to go into production.

Born in High Wycombe, Bucks, de Havilland initially pursued a career in automotive engineering, but his real interest lay in aero engines: prior to WW1, he designed, built and test flew aircraft at the Royal Aircraft Factory at Farnborough, and flew his first aircraft in 1910, this becoming the first aircraft to be bought by the British Government. In 1920, de Havilland formed the de Havilland Aircraft Company at Stag Lane Aerodrome, Edgware, where the **Moth** series of racing aircraft (Tiger Moth, Gypsy Moth). A new factory was built in 1934 at Hatfield. Here, the **Mosquito**



aircraft was built. They moved into the jet age with a series of fighters, the **Vampire**, **Venom** and **Sea Vixen**, and pioneered jet powered passenger aircraft with the **Comet**, **Trident**, and the UK's most successful passenger jet, the **146**.



The Mosquito was designed at Salisbury Hall, built in 1668 (Nell Gwynne lived in a cottage close to the Hall). A hangar was erected in the grounds of the Hall where the first Mosquito prototype was constructed using wood. After the war, the Hall declined into a derelict condition, but in 1955, it was restored and the Mosquito prototype was exhibited in a new hangar behind the Hall. In 1959, the hangar formed the central exhibit of the **de Havilland Aircraft Museum** – the first aviation museum in Britain. Since then, the museum has acquired more land and several new hangars have been erected to exhibit a large range of de Havilland aircraft.



Sea Vixen radar test set



DH 110 Sea Vixen cockpit

It was the first British fighter to have no guns, being armed with air-to-air missiles and unguided rockets.



Frank Halford collection of aircraft engines.

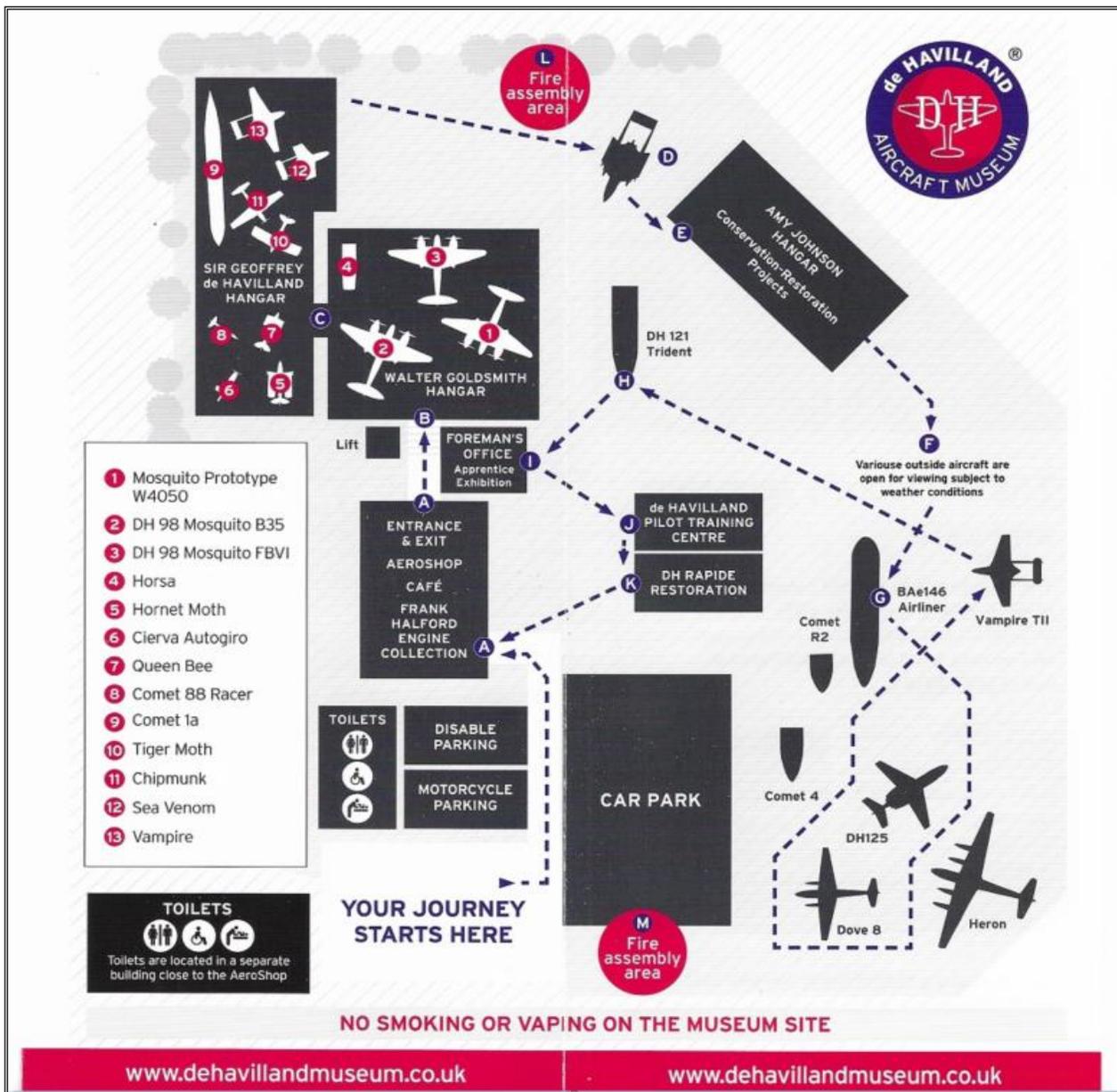
Halford designed the de Havilland Gypsy air-cooled inline engines, and the WW2 Goblin jet engine

DH 106 Comet 1a cockpit

This aircraft is the only survivor of the original square-windowed Comets.

Two of these early Comets crashed into the sea off Italy, killing all on board, leading to the discovery of the metal fatigue in aircraft.





### Site Map

**Where and when to meet:** Coffee area in the Entrance hut ('A' in the site map above)

**Getting there:** see area map, below.

**Lunch:** At the Museum, included in the price

### Timetable:

Time	Details
10:30	Arrival – Tea/Coffee & Biscuits
11:00	Commence Tour (Walter Goldsmith Hanger – Mosquitos)
11:45	Talk on the GEE II system for navigation used by Pathfinders in WW2
12:30	Lunch (Fish & Chips or Cold Buffet – served in Balcony Room)
13:15	Tour part 2 (Geoffrey de Havilland Hanger)
13:45	Brief talk on Comet 1a
14:00	Tour part 3 (Amy Johnson Hanger & Aero Field)
14:45	Return to Café & shop
15:15	End of Tour, but free time for attendees to revisit any of the hangars

**Size of party:** max 25

**Cost:** £35.00 including refreshments and lunch.

**Contacts:**

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Hugh Deighton on 07712 563360 [hugh@deighton.info](mailto:hugh@deighton.info)

**Late arrivals:** phone John Belling as above.

## Directions to the de Havilland Aircraft Museum from M25, junction 22

The de Havilland Aircraft Museum is located next to Salisbury Hall off the B556 (St Albans Road) from Junction 22, M25. The photo below right shows the driveway to the museum from the B556 – easy to miss!

The (somewhat unfocussed) map below left shows the “orange route” for cars. Do not take the “red route” – this is for coaches only.

If you are using SAT NAV, the post code is AL2 1BU. This works for me in Google Maps and Waze, but unfortunately not Tom-Tom. I also found that entering “De Havilland Aircraft Museum” into Google Maps and Tom-Tom got you to the wrong point (but Waze was ok). The parking at the museum is adequate – you should be ok.

A number 84 bus from St. Albans High Street or Barnet and Potters Bar Railway Stations stop just outside the driveway that leads to the Museum. The walk is approximately 400m.

