

# **FLEET AIR ARM MUSEUM**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Museum Open Day Oct 27th will reveal new projects**

This autumn half term the Fleet Air Arm Museum will open the doors on its Reserve Collection and reveal new additions to its internationally important collection.

Visitors will see crumpled pieces of aircraft that have been carefully placed into position as if a gigantic crime scene was being investigated. (*See Photo*). This is in preparation for a restoration project that the Fleet Air Arm Museum believe will become the world's only WW2 Barracuda torpedo bomber.

Says Dave Morris Curator of Aircraft "We have been collecting sections of Barracuda since the early 1970s. We were able to rebuild the nose section a few years ago, however only now are we able to begin the process of identification and restoration of the rest of the aircraft."

With around 2500 aircraft built, the Fairey Barracuda was the Royal Navy's most common aircraft during WW2 yet unlike other more iconic aircraft of its era none were retained for posterity.

Also on display for the first time will be a Wessex HU.5 which served as a "Junglie", the famous green helicopters, beloved by the Royal Marines, adding to one of the largest collections of Westland Helicopters.

In addition, the Reserve Collection includes over thirty historic aircraft and some five miles of shelving accommodating many of the Museum's 2 million records and 30 thousand artefacts.

The Reserve Collection also includes the world's oldest aircraft carrier, the 1918 Thorneycroft Lighter H21 which is on the National Register of Historic Vessels. This sixty foot long streamlined craft was towed behind fast RN destroyers, allowing aircraft to take off at sea during the First World War.

The Fleet Air Arm Museum's Reserve Collection Open Day will take place on Thursday October 27th. Doors open at 10.00 and tickets will be available on the door for £4.00

***Caption: Barracuda pre-restoration***

**ENDS**

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