

AVIATION MUSEUMS OF BRITAIN

Includes 100s of other ideas for family days out



Ken Ellis

Dedicated to all those organisations – large and small – who are brave enough to open their doors and let their pride and joy go on display to the public.

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The main aircraft display hall at the Aerospace Museum, Cosford. The upper level walkway affords good views and allows visitors to look right into the cockpit of the Dakota.
(Aerospace Museum)

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Front, Alan Curry; Rear top, Newark Air Museum;
Rear bottom, Fleet Air Arm Museum.

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INTRODUCTION

There has long been a need for a book on aviation museums that works 'harder' than most. Listening to fellow enthusiasts over many years always left me with the feeling there was much more a 'guide' could do for them.

The most important concept addressed here may well be seen as heresy to some — that there is more to life than aircraft! Many an aviation enthusiast is to be found happy as a lamb wending through the locomotives at a steam museum, or vintage car collection or the Victoria & Albert. More than this, there is the family to take into consideration and a visit to an aviation museum can be extended to find something else that will please the rest of the household as well. This book has been devised to offer other alternatives, hopefully not by way of a sop to 'her indoors' but to allow everyone to find venues of interest and, who knows, to make it easier to visit an aviation museum next time!

With the co-operation of the museums concerned, greatly expanded information has been given on the facilities that are available at museums — some that may be quite crucial to a successful family day out. It is believed that *AMB* is the first aviation museum guide ever to provide details of how to travel to these venues by public transport and which offer help to the disabled. Great emphasis has been made of the excellent services to be had from the Tourist Boards, a source all too frequently overlooked by many visitors.

The book has adopted, with a few 'tweaks' the larger 'regions' used by the English Tourist Boards as a more useful way of showing touring possibilities. County boundaries are shown on each of the map 'headers, but readers are reminded that we are all soon to be thrown into turmoil again with the next reshuffle!

Another cornerstone of the book has been to include only museums and collections that are truly open to the public on a regular basis. The general ruling has been only to include venues that are at least open at weekends throughout the summer season. Other venues that genuinely encourage visitors by prior arrangement are given briefer mentions.

The illustrations attempt to show the broad sweep of aviation museums in Britain — there is a wondrous variety out there to sample. Hence there are photographs of displays, as well as airframes for it is often the latter that 'capture' visitors for longer. To add further flavour to the pictorial element some views of exhibits 'in action' before retirement are also included.

The contents of *AMB* have been arrived out from the suggestions of many friends over the years and it is hoped the book adds to the enjoyment of readers as they follow their interests. Comments, suggestions and additions are very welcome so that the next edition will 'work' even harder for you!

Ken Ellis
Barrowden, Rutland
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