

## **RED ARROWS DISPLAY TO RETURN TO GUERNSEY TO MARK THE CENTENARY LANDMARK YEAR FOR LOCAL AVIATION**

**News Release**

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2019 marks the centenary of civil aviation in Guernsey and the Red Arrows are confirmed to be part of the 2019 Guernsey Air Display that will now take place on Thursday 6 June 2019 to coincide with the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day Normandy Landings.

The Red Arrows were never going to be able to be part of the Guernsey Air Display on its traditional September date, due to being on tour in the USA and Canada but a separate application for the new date of Thursday 6 June has been successful.

The 2019 Guernsey Air Display will take place between 11:00 and 13:15 (subject to final confirmation) over the skies of St. Peter Port.

“The Red Arrows and the spectacle of their world class precision flying aerobatics are the biggest draw of any air show” said Alex Bridle, Founder & Managing Director of The Guernsey Event Company Ltd who are responsible for raising the funds to get the Guernsey Air Display airborne. “We are delighted that our separate application for the Red Arrows to display has been approved and that the thousands on island and visitors who are aviation enthusiasts will be able to enjoy the iconic sights and sounds of the Red Arrows in June this year.”

It is now a race against time to raise the £60,000 that is needed to cover the costs of the Guernsey Air Display including the display fees for participating aircraft, the display insurance, fuel and accommodation for the pilots.

Contrary to common perception or belief, the Guernsey Air Display is not funded in its entirety by the public purse but by a Consortium of private sector companies in the Bailiwick plus a small grant from the States of Guernsey. Funding for the annual Air Display is an increasing challenge year on year as access to military aircraft becomes harder, due to military commitments around the world, and there is a greater reliance on booking privately owned aircraft that carry higher display fees.

There are various ways that financial support can be pledged: either by becoming a Consortium Member, a Corporate Friend or Individual Friend of the Guernsey Air Display. Everyone – be it an individual or business organisation – receives benefits for being part of the Guernsey Air Display. Visit [www.guernseyairdisplay.com](http://www.guernseyairdisplay.com) for details on how to get involved with #MakeItHappenGAD.

It was in 1903 that history was made when Wilbur and Orville Wright made four brief flights on 17 December at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, USA, with their first powered aircraft: the Wright brothers had pioneered and invented the first successful airplane.

As Bill Gates once observed “The Wright Brothers created the single greatest cultural force since the invention of writing. The airplane became the first World Wide Web, bringing people, languages, ideas and values together.”

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In a year packed with anniversaries, 2019 will see both the centenary of civil aviation in Guernsey and the eightieth anniversary of Guernsey Airport.

Guernsey entered the world of aviation in World War 1 when the French established an anti-submarine seaplane base near Castle Cornet. 4 October 1919 was the start of what is now the centenary of civil aviation in Guernsey when an Avro 536 prototype seaplane settled on the waves of St Peter Port. It discharged one passenger, a Lt Fulford who had hitched a lift from Jersey, the aircraft's first port of call from Southampton. Four years later in 1923, a regular scheduled passenger service was started using a Supermarine Sea Eagle flying boat.

In May 1939 the new Guernsey Airport at La Villiaize, Forest secured approval from the States of Guernsey by the narrowest of margins 26 votes to 25. The current site was officially opened on 5 May 1939 and operated passenger flights to Heston (London) and Southampton.

1944 is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings on the beaches of Normandy and also of Canadian pilot Flt Lt John Saville and his Typhoon aircraft being shot down over the east coast of Guernsey and sinking to the bottom of Havelet Bay in St. Peter Port. The wreck has never been raised but the site was declared a war grave some thirty plus years ago and a plaque honouring Flt Lt John Saville can be found on raised walkway leading to Castle Cornet.

Flt Lt John Saville was shot down the day before D-Day as he bombed a radar installation on Guernsey. The Freya radar at Fort George was of significant military importance as it covered the area to the west of the Normandy beaches. It was deemed imperative that the RAF could not use the radar to assist the units in Normandy with any advance warnings of aircraft or ship movements: they had to be destroyed before 6 June 1944.

Flt Lt Saville who was 34 when he died, was originally from Vancouver, Canada but was based in Dorset during World War II. He was a member of 439 Squadron, which was formed in 1943, and was the first member of his unit to be killed in action.

"The Guernsey Air Display is one mammoth team effort that delights each and every spectator when the Air Display takes to the skies above St Peter Port." said Alan Brunger, President of the Royal Air Forces Association (Guernsey Branch). "The sole raison d'être of the Guernsey Air Display is to remember and commemorate all those who have fought in conflicts from World War 1 to the present day and will continue to do so in the future.

"I cannot think of a better date for the 2019 Guernsey Air Display than 6 June with all its poignancy of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day Normandy Landings. As in June 1944 and all conflicts around the world past, present and future, many who have fought, are fighting or will fight for their country have paid and will pay the ultimate price with their lives."

**For more information on the 2019 Guernsey Air Display and how to support it  
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