

PRESS RELEASE – 20th May 2011

A MOMENT IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE'S AVIATION HISTORY



A unique, never-before-seen glimpse of Gloucestershire's aviation history took place at Gloucestershire Airport, Staverton, yesterday when all three of the Gloster Aircraft Company jet aircraft types were lined up together for the first time ever.

The Jet Age Museum's Gloster Javelin and Gloster Meteor, that are already stored at the Airport, were joined by arguably the great grandfather of the jet age, when the Gloster E28 'Whittle' arrived at the airport.

The full size replica of the famous first British jet had been at RAF Cranwell last weekend commemorating the 70th anniversary of the first official flight. The only surviving prototype of this aircraft has been in the Science Museum in London since 1946, long before the Javelin left the drawing board.

The airport also proudly hosted 92-year old former GAC apprentice, Sidney Dix from Longlevens, who helped to build the E28 and strapped the pilot in for the first flight back in May 1941.

Airport Head of Operations, Darren Lewington said: - "It was our privilege to have Sidney here on this special day. His memories of those momentous events all those years ago were as vivid as had it been yesterday. He's a fascinating character."

Sidney spent several hours at the airport examining the collection, reminiscing with the Jet Age Museum's trustees and remembering his former colleagues. He said: -"Those days were the happiest of my life, we worked very hard and in great secrecy. It's wonderful to see these aeroplanes together after all these years."

The Jet Age Museum – an all volunteer charity - has planning permission to build a permanent home for their collection at the Airport but needs to raise around £70 000 to complete the project. The aircraft will remain on display outside the Terminal at the airport this weekend, where you can help the museum reach its goal by joining as a member for just £10 per year.

Visit www.jetagemuseum.org or follow us on Facebook to download your application form.