

**PRESS RELEASE – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**A JOURNEY BACK INTO JET AGE HISTORY**



Volunteers at the County's Jet Age Museum are preparing to recreate a historic journey that took place 70 years ago. On Thursday, their full scale replica of the Gloster E28/39 'Whittle' aircraft will leave its Brockworth workshop bound for RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire where a special commemorative event is planned next weekend.

Exactly seventy years earlier, this journey was a pre-cursor to the first official flight of a jet aircraft in the UK, when the prototype E28 left the Gloster Aircraft Company factory at Brockworth.

The aircraft, fitted with Sir Frank Whittle's revolutionary engine, had already made a series of 200 yard 'hops' along the runway at Brockworth airfield during taxiing trials but on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1941, with Chief Test Pilot Flt. Lt. Gerry Sayer at the controls, it left the Lincolnshire runway for a 17-minute flight, heralding the birth of the jet age in the UK.

Accompanying the aircraft as an invited guest of honour will be 92-year old Sidney Dix from Longlevens. Sidney is the last known surviving GAC employee who worked on the E28 project and was present at Cranwell for that first historic flight. Jet Age Museum trustee Tim Kershaw said: - "Sidney is delighted to have been invited back to Cranwell after all these years and it's our privilege to have him with us."

After the event, the E28 will return to Gloucestershire Airport, Staverton where the museum has planning permission for a permanent home for their collection. The museum needs to raise £70 000 to complete the building. You can help the museum reach its goal by joining as a member for just £10 per year. Visit [www.jetagemuseum.org](http://www.jetagemuseum.org) or follow us on Facebook to download your application form.