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Yorkshire's Halifax rolled out for special event

The Yorkshire Air Museum's magnificent reconstruction of Handley Page Halifax III LV907 'Friday The 13th' made a rare appearance outside recently for a special event at the Elvington attraction. The Halifax was the centrepiece of 'Against The Odds' on May 12 and 13, a World War Two-themed weekend that included talks, costumed re-enactors and a vintage dance group.

www.yorkshireairmuseum.org KEY-STEVE BEEBEE



Tracker runs its engines at Lelystad debut



Aviodrome's US-2N '151' runs its engines and demonstrates its wing-folding mechanism on April 28. FRANK MINK

Grumman US-2N Tracker 147641 '151' was rolled out in its new colour scheme on April 28 following restoration at the Aviodrome in Lelystad, the Netherlands.

The aircraft fired up both of its engines – one of which was sourced from the UK – and also opened and closed its wings. Other hydraulic systems, including bomb bay doors, arrestor hook and boom were also demonstrated.

Its unveiling concludes two years of work by volunteers, and a repaint by Lelystad-based company Satys into the colours worn during its service with the Netherlands Naval Aviation Service (Marine Luchtvaartdienst –

MLD). Further external markings will be applied in the next few weeks, with weapon racks added to the wings, along with other details.

Tracker '151' was delivered to the MLD on April 23, 1960 as an S2F-1 variant. It was converted to a US-2N target tug in December 1970, and flew with Dutch units VSQ5 and VSQ320 before being decommissioned in January 1976.

It subsequently served with Dutch national airline KLM as an instructional airframe, and was painted in company livery. The distinctive looking machine has been at the Aviodrome since July 1970.

FRANK MINK

Greek Spitfire to fly again after Biggin Hill rebuild

Supermarine Spitfire LF.IXc MJ755 has been delivered by road from the Hellenic Air Force Museum's Tatoï-Dekelia site in Greece to Kent's Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar.

Restoration to flying condition after its arrival in April is expected to take several years before it is returned to Greece.

Spitfire MJ755 was built at Castle Bromwich in late 1943 and issued to No.33 MU at Lyneham, Wiltshire. In 1944 it was allocated to 2 Squadron, South African Air Force, in North Africa, but by August it had been transferred to the RAF's 43 Squadron. Coded 'FT-V', it flew with the 'Fighting Cocks' as top cover for Allied forces in Operation 'Dragoon', the landings in southern France in August 1944.

The unit moved bases several times, including a stint at Peretola (now Florence's airport) in northern

Italy, and was at Klagenfurt in Austria when the war ended. The fighter then became one of 77 Spitfires supplied to the Hellenic Air Force, joining 335 Squadron at Sedes on February 27, 1947. It later flew with the air force training school at Tatoï-Dekelia, and in 1950 was fitted with two cameras for reconnaissance duties. Its last flight was on September 8, 1953, after which it was stored at Hellenikon before assuming 'gate guard' duties at Dekelia from 1972 to 1978.

A transfer to the Hellenic War Museum in Athens saw a further period of external display, from 1985 to 1991, before '755 was moved to the new Hellenic Air Force Museum in 1994. It was restored to taxiing condition in 2006, and then dismantled with the aim of being restored to fly.

www.bigginhillheritagehangar.co.uk

PAUL MIDDLETON

