



Airmen and Airfields of the Allied Forces

USAAF & RAF Bomber Boys of the UK

May 20 - 31, 2017

\$4965.00 Land and Air Package (Dbl Occ) \$1200.00 Solo Suppl.

Immerse yourself in their history... WWII War Birds – Flying Fortresses, Liberators, Spitfires... Lancasters, Manchesters, Mosquitos.... and the crews who flew them, including our Honorary Host Ted Hazell of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio... who flew 35 combat missions on B-24 Liberators. (Photo: Hazell & family with Ehlers, 06/16)



Led by Dr. Robert "Rob" Ehlers (USAF, Col., Ret.), author of *Targeting the Third Reich: Air Intelligence and the Allied Bombing Campaign*, this expedition visits secret war rooms, hidden bunkers, and intelligence centers where the commanders of the US Army Air Force and RAF plotted strategic bombing raids of the Nazi war machine's industrial hubs, fuel depots, and railways and roadways.

View restoration projects in ramshackle hangars at abandoned airfields, and hear the rumble of refurbished WWII aircraft in formation over the Duxford campus of the Imperial War Museum during its annual spring air show. And on Memorial Day, pay tribute to our military dead buried at the American Cemetery in nearby Cambridge.

Saturday, May 20, – Depart Philadelphia: American Airlines PHL 7:20 PM Arrive London 7:45 AM (Local Time – a five-hour time difference.) OR Plan your own air & meet us there! (Call for "Land Only" price.)

Sunday, May 21 – (L, D) Map Making – British Civilians do their Part

Meet our country host at London's Heathrow Airport. We'll keep you moving through the jet lag with a bountiful brunch and short walking tours of two recently "uncovered" sites.

Hughenden Manor – Learn of the secret activities of Operation Hillside followed by a tour of the WWII map making exhibit in the cellar of the Manor Home.

Bovingdon Market – Site of an RAF airfield during WWII... now a Saturday's farmer's market... meet an RAF historian for a tour of the decaying buildings that served the RAF in 1940's.

Lodging: Danesfield House – early group dinner – time to relax & enjoy a long, restful night's sleep

Monday, May 22 – (B, L) Cracking the Nazi Code – Bletchley Park

Woburn Abbey - Imagine the park-like grounds lined with aircraft, including Tiger Moths, Spitfires, Hurricanes and Wellingtons, tucked under trees on alert, as civilian technicians worked on gliders in preparation for D-Day. Navy "Wrens," deciphering Nazi code at Bletchley Park, were billeted here.

Bletchley Park - The secrecy surrounding the activities carried on here during WWII was of vital importance to national security and ultimate victory. Breaking the code of "Axis" communication, including **Enigma**, would give the Allies the pieces to a complex puzzle, revealing the enemy's military plans. The 2014 movie "The Imitation Game" is worth watching before your departure.



Return to hotel. Dinner on own. Wander the spectacular grounds of this grand hotel where the RAF took up residence in 1940. It's easy to visualize the temporary wooden RAF housing that dotted the landscape.

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Tuesday, May 23 - (B, L) **The Battle of Britain...The Fight for the Skies over London**

Uxbridge Bunker - EXCLUSIVE... RAF Chief Historian Seb Cox will be our host!

The nerve-center of the RAF during the Battle of London was here, in the **No.11 (Fighter) Group Operations Room**, a hidden enclave twenty miles west of the city. Fighter operations during the Normandy Landings were also directed from this room, shown exactly as it was on September 15, 1940, the day on which Winston Churchill visited and witnessed the conduct of the most significant day of the Battle of Britain.



Royal Air Force Museum- Situated on the historic site of Hendon's London Aerodrome in Colindale, this national museum tells the story of the Royal Air Force through its people and collections. The highlight of our visit is the sound and light show "Our Finest Hour," the story of **the Battle of Britain**.

Lodging: The Best Western Brome Grange, Eye, Suffolk Dinner on own.

Wednesday, May 24 - (B) **American Bomber Boys bring Swagger and Bravado**

100th Bomb Group Museum - Housed in the original airfield control tower and other historic buildings, this museum celebrates the American bomber boys who came to Thorpe Abbots, Norfolk, to fight with the Allies.

Halesworth Airfield Museum - Halesworth Airfield, **home of the 56th Fighter Group and the 489th Bomb Group**, positioned eight miles from the English coast, provided the eastern most airstrips for the lumbering heavy bombers taking aim for targets in France, Holland and the Rhineland. Get a feel of what life was like in the 1940s for the airmen stationed here. ***This is an exclusive entry for our tour; the museum is closed on Wednesdays.***

Return to hotel. Dinner on own.

Thursday - May 25 - (B, L) **From Beer Hall to Museum**

(These are exclusive entries for our tour; the museums are closed on Thursdays.)

Martlesham - Heath - Three squadrons, **the 359th, the 360th and the 361st, of the 356th Fighter Group of the 8th Air Force**, were based here from October 1943 to May 1945. Initially, P47 "Thunderbolts" escorted B17's and Liberators on daylight raids over occupied Europe. P51 "Mustangs" replaced the fleet of P47s and the role changed to bombing and strafing missions. The seventy-two airmen who lost their lives while serving here are honored with a memorial in the town square, and at the **Church of St. Michael's and All Angels**, where a book contains seventy-two pages, one for each fatality, detailing that airman's service and final mission.



Red Feather Museum - Home of the **95th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force** flew 334 missions between May 14th 1943 and May 25th 1945 and was the first Bomb Group to perform a daylight raid on Berlin. It claimed 425 enemy aircraft destroyed, the highest number by any USAAF Bomb Group in WW2.

Dinner on own at Hotel/restaurants nearby

Friday - May 26 (B) **History and Heritage Spared from The Blitz**

Cambridge - Spires of knowledge mark the entrance to the **University of Cambridge** where a morning walking tour will pass iconic King's Chapel, and along venues dating back to the 12th century. Spared from the bombing by the Luftwaffe, the city offers historic parks and quaint passages, a winding river lined with pubs and restaurants, and an abundance of thriving art venues. Enjoy free time to shop, visit a museum, or take in a theater performance.

Lodging: DoubleTree by Hilton, Cambridge. Dinner on own

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Saturday - May 27 (B) Personal Accounts and the UK's Premier Collection of Warbirds Duxford, Imperial War Museum *including the Spring Air Show with Priority Pass Viewing!*

The Imperial War Museum's Duxford campus features five museum buildings, including the **American Air Museum**, which reopened on March 19, 2016 after an 18-month renovation. Tour independently or follow Dr. Ehlers through key exhibits. At its peak, 450,000 Americans with temporary wartime residency in the UK supported the vast and varied strategies of the USAAF command...bombing and strafing, rescue missions and humanitarian "drops" like Operation Varsity. Nearly 30,000 never made it home.

Return to Hotel - dinner on own

Sunday - May 28 (B, D) Memorial Day Tribute and Remembering Churchill

American Cemetery of Cambridge - The remains of 3,812 of our military dead lie buried here; 5,127 names are recorded on the Tablets of the Missing. Many buried here, or listed as missing, were killed in the Battle of the Atlantic, on submarines or Navy vessels, or were Army Air Force personnel, pilots and crew members of warbirds which flew strategic air bombardment of northwest Europe.

Churchill Bunker - As the Battle of Britain raged on in the skies. Churchill, elected Prime Minister in May 1940, promised his people that they would "never surrender." His promise was to be tested within months of that pledge, as he found himself hunkered down below street level in the cavernous shelter.

Lodging: Copthorne Tara Hotel, London - Group dinner

Monday - May 29 (B) Royal Navy and the Spirit of the British

HMS Belfast - Tour nine decks of the Royal Navy's warship which saw WWII service on D-Day during the Invasion of Normandy. Her thirty-three day mission along the Normandy coast was her last engagement during WWII but she continued serving until her "retirement" in 1963.

St. Clement Dane's Church - The central church of the Royal Air Force, this beautiful cathedral has stood on the same spot for over 1,000 years. In May, 1941, an incendiary bomb destroyed the interior, leaving only the walls and tower, but the spirit of Londoners prevailed. In 1958, the church was rebuilt and returned to the RAF.

St Paul's Cathedral - This iconic photo of St. Paul's, taken during the Blitz, inspired Londoners and united the country behind Churchill who declared "St. Paul's must be saved at all costs." The collection and memorials reveal the heartache of Londoners as they buried loved ones and lost their homes and possessions to the Nazi bombing.



Return to Hotel Dinner on own

Tuesday, May 30 (B, D) FREE DAY - Farewell Dinner

FREE Day in London

Farewell Dinner

Wednesday May 31 - Back to the USA

Transfer to LHR for our American Airlines 2:10 PM flight. Arrive Philadelphia 5:20 PM EST.

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