

Blackpool aviation fans want to rebuild aircraft similar to that which Amy Johnson last flew

Blackpool aviation enthusiasts are hoping to build a replica of the aircraft that legend Amy Johnson flew on her last flight.

By Tim Gavell

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The team from Hangar 42 at Blackpool Airport have got the parts of an Airspeed Oxford, the wartime training aircraft which was a regular sight at Squires Gate in the 1940s. The aeroplanes were used to train bomber crews, often in Canada, where the Blackpool aircraft served before being brought back by the Midland Aircraft Recovery Group in the late 1990s.

Now the Hangar 42 museum team have bought it to add to their collection and have launched a fund-raising drive “Saving Amy” to restore it.



From left, Eric Watkiss (Saving Amy) Jenny Lockyer (entertainer) Jane Priston (Amy Johnson Project) Dallas Campbell (TV Presenter) examining the RAF Museum Hendons Airspeed Oxford

Aerospace engineer Eric Watkiss said it would be the perfect addition to the Piper Cub acquired last year and which now flies from the airport.

He said: "We have our replica aircraft but had been looking for originals that would have been based at Blackpool during the war. The Airspeed Oxford is very rare, there are only six in existence. We have 6,000 original design drawings and hope to have the cockpit section built using original parts in the next 12 months and use it for fund-raising.

The other Blackpool connection is through Amy Johnson. Her last flight was from Prestwick and she stopped at Blackpool overnight with her sister who lived near Stanley Park. From there she flew on south but crashed in the sea in Herne Bay in 1941."



The parts for the Airspeed Oxford that aviation fans at Hangar 42 want to build at Blackpool Airport

John Coombes, from the Lytham St Annes Spitfire Ground Display team behind Hangar 42, said: "The component parts are now sitting in our workshops at the airport. We are now looking for help with specialist wood, some tooling and metal fabrication but also sponsors. We are first aiming to have the aircraft as a static display but perhaps get it back to taxiing."



Aviatrice Amy Johnson, the first woman to fly solo from London to Australia, who was lost in 1941 after flying from Blackpool airport to the south of England. Her aircraft an Airspeed Oxford that she was delivering, crashed into the sea off Herne Bay in the Thames Estuary