

# PRESS RELEASE



Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023



## Airfix celebrates Women's History Month

Today marks International Women's Day and to celebrate, Airfix is proud to highlight some key contributions of women throughout history, as part of an exciting campaign celebrating Women's History Month, *March 2023*.

As part of this campaign, aimed to inspire young people, especially young women, to strive for their dreams, we throw a spotlight on women in aviation. Over the course of the month, we will speak with some aviation icons and share key dates and accomplishments of women who changed the face of the aviation industry forever.

In an exclusive interview with Airfix, Kirsty Murphy MBE, the first female Red Arrows pilot, described the pressure of gaining this title when she was first accepted onto the team:

***"I don't want to be the first female in the Red Arrows. I just want to be a Red Arrows pilot."***

Kirsty recalled the application process: "I was very conscious that there hadn't been any females on the team at that point. One fellow pilot in particular said, *'I just wouldn't want to be the first female in the Red Arrows; the pressure will change that experience.'*"

Kirsty added: "I thought *I get that*, because I don't either, I don't want to be the first female in the Red Arrows. I just want to be a Red Arrows pilot."

Despite feeling this way, Kirsty explained: "it didn't feel like a strong enough reason not to apply, so I did it and never looked back".

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Kirsty detailed how building Airfix kits as a young girl with her father fuelled her aspirations to take to the skies. She said: “I remember what it feels like to look at those Airfix models and just be longing for this life ahead of me and wanting to be this fast jet pilot.”

Adding: “I kept that [*longing*] alive by looking at my Airfix models that I'd made and by making them; it's a very special thing you can do with your family, and I have such strong memories of building them with my dad”. *Stay tuned to [Airfix.com](https://www.airfix.com) for the full interview.*



## ‘Breaking barriers’

Today, on International Women’s Day, we also highlight the astounding feats of Diana Barnato Walker, who, in August 1963, stepped into an RAF Lightning jet XM996, rocketed into the sky, and made history, reaching Mach 1.65 or 1,262 mph, becoming the first British woman to break the sound barrier.

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Encouraging generations of women to fly, breaking the sound barrier was just one of many aviation credentials Diana earned throughout her career. During WWII, she was a member of the Air Transport Auxiliary and by the end of the war had delivered 260 Spitfires. Diana's logbook reveals that she also flew Gladiators, Beaufighters, Hurricanes, Mosquitos, a Swordfish, an Avenger, Mustangs, Typhoons and Mitchell bombers.

Breaking barriers indeed, one thing is clear, Diana's aviation accomplishments are nothing short of extraordinary.

## **Do you have any remarkable stories to share?**

If you have stories of achievement from women in aviation, we invite you to share them with us so we can share their stories.

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Email [marketing@airfix.com](mailto:marketing@airfix.com) or call 01843 233 500

### **About Hornby Hobbies Limited**

Hornby Hobbies Limited is a toy and hobby product manufacturer that was founded in the early 1900's. Hornby Hobbies Limited portfolio of brands include: Hornby – model trains, Scalextric – slot car racing, Airfix – plastic model kits, Humbrol – paints and craft product, and Corgi – die-cast models. In addition to these iconic British brands Hornby Hobbies Limited also owns a number of international brands including: Lima, Rivarossi, Jouef, Pocher and Arnold.

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