

1940

SPITFIRE Mk1a

P9372



- Built Feb 22nd 1940 This Spitfire was one of 200 produced by Vickers Armstrong at Castle Bromwich.
- Powered by a rolls Royce Merlin III engine.
- Based RAF Cosford no9 Maintenance un then moved to No 92 East India Sqn based at Northolt.
- Damaged whilst operating from Hornchurch then moved Brize Norton for repair and returned to No 92 East India Sqn July 27.
- September 9th 1940 engaged Me109's and was shot down near Biggin Hill at 17.30hrs. Pilot officer William Watling baled out but was badly burnt on his face and hands. After months of treatment by Sir Archibald McIndoe at the Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead he returned to 92 Sqn operations.
- PO Watling lost his life on February 7th 1941 whilst carrying out a weather test flight from RAF Manston. Just 20 years of age he rests in the St Marys Cray Cemetery near Orpington,
- The remains of P9732 were the subject of an excavation in the 1970's. Many parts of the Spitfire were recovered and remained on display on the wall here at the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar.
- The decision to restore P9732 was made in 2019



