

WINGS SPAN FIFTY YEARS

At Hendon over a hundred aircraft tell the story of the conquest of the sky. Jet fighters (on nodding terms with the barrier of the speed of sound) - the mighty Lancaster (which helped to force the Nazis to their knees) - stand at the side of the first conquerors of gravity. The little Bleriot 9 which flew the Channel forty-two years ago - just wood and wire, stick and string. Nostalgic memories for pilots of '14, for fighters of the Flying Corps like Major Hughie Baker who flew the Sopwith Pup - 1916 - with its machine gun firing through the airscrew; and Flight Commander Stanton D.C.M., who'll take her up today. A 1913 silver Rolls for pilots of the jet-age. A crowd of thousands sees them fly the veterans. The Bleriot 9 takes off.

And a Deperdussin 1911 shows its paces in 1951.

Before we flew we floated. History turns full cycle as the "Bournemouth" - Britain's first airship in 20 years - leaves its Gardington hangar. The 15-foot gondola is open and can take four people, that is, if they are not too heavy. But the father of the "Bournemouth" - Lord Ventry - weighs 17½ stone, and so the man who planned and built the airship must stay behind as "Bournemouth" prepares to take off.

Squadron Leader York-Moore, airship veteran of World War I, guides the "Bournemouth" into the sky.

Lord Ventry's dream has come true. His contribution to the Festival of Britain - the "Bournemouth" - proudly sails the air.