



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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PRESS CALL

4.30PM, TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY, 2015

CARSTARES ROOM, OLD COLLEGE

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

SOUTH BRIDGE, EH8 9YL

World's greatest test pilot speaks about Britain's defence strategy

A veteran pilot who holds the world record for flying the greatest number of different aircraft will offer his thoughts on UK defence strategies at a lecture this week.

Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown, now 96, is the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm's most decorated aviator. He was the first person to land a jet on an aircraft carrier and piloted Britain's first supersonic flight.

Drawing from his extraordinary experiences, he will deliver this year's University of Edinburgh Mountbatten Lecture, entitled Britain's Defence in the Near Future, which will take place in the Playfair Library on Tuesday 24 February at 5.30pm.

Captain Brown was a languages student at the University of Edinburgh, and was on an exchange course in Germany when the Gestapo arrested in 1939. He subsequently joined the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve.

He was one of only two men to survive an attack on HMS Audacity, which was torpedoed by a German U-boat in December 1941.

His aptitude for flight deck landings – acknowledged as one of the most difficult maneuvers a pilot can make – led him to test aircraft carriers before they were brought into service.

He has tested 487 aircrafts, including experimental Nazi jets, and for more than 65 years has held the world record for most flight deck landings.

Captain Brown is one of the few pilots to receive the Distinguished Service Cross and the Air Force Cross for acts of courage throughout his career, as well as his numerous campaign medals. He was also awarded an Honorary Degree from the University of Edinburgh in 2008.

The Mountbatten Lecture is an annual event at the University of Edinburgh. Each year, an expert on defence-related matters is invited to speak to staff, students and the wider public.

Previous speakers include astronaut Neil Armstrong, broadcaster Kate Adie, former Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, and NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson.

Captain Brown is available for interviews at 4.30pm, Tuesday 25 February. Places are limited, so to book a place, please contact Kathryn Dunlop on 0131 651 5587; or email kathryn.dunlop@ed.ac.uk

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