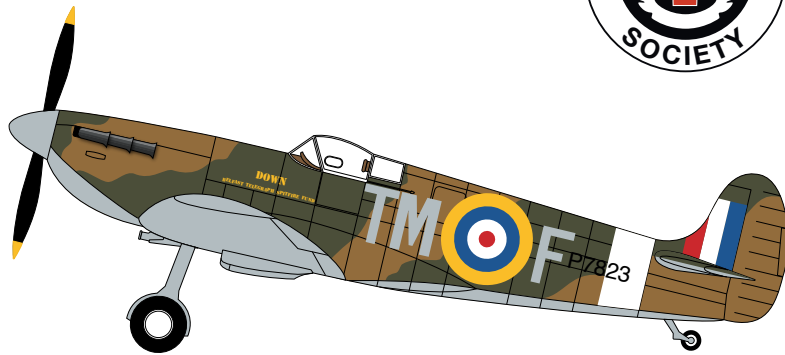


NORTHERN IRELAND  
**WAR MEMORIAL**  
MUSEUM



DESIGN ILLUSTRATION: JOHN MATHIAS

# SPITFIRE MK IIA



The Ulster Aviation Society's Spitfire is an exact copy of the type of aircraft purchased through the famous **Belfast Telegraph Spitfire Fund**, launched on Wednesday 7 August 1940.

It originally aimed to raise £5,000 for one Spitfire but ended up raising £88,633,16s.5d which was enough for 17.

People were encouraged to donate by slogans such as *Speed that Spitfire* and *A Spitfire a Day Keeps the Nazis Away*.

Regardless of how little or how much they gave, the name of every single donor was published in the newspaper. The Spitfires were named *Antrim*, *Armagh*, *Down*, *Fermanagh*, *Londonderry*, *Tyrone*,

*Larne*, *Ballymena*, *Bangor*, *Aldergrove*, *Mountains O'Mourne*, *Enniskillen*, *Mid-Ulster*, *Belfast*, *Portadown*, *City of Derry* and *Harlandic*. Most of the planes crashed or were destroyed in combat during the Second World War but *Enniskillen* and *Fermanagh* survived the war.

The Ulster Aviation Society's Spitfire is called *Down* after Co. Down and carries the letter code TM-F and serial number P7823 as well as the *Belfast Telegraph Spitfire Fund* slogan. The real *Down Spitfire* was the only one to be based in Northern Ireland between August 1941 and January 1942 at RAF Ballyhalbert with No 504 Squadron Auxiliary Air Force.

On 7th January 1942, *Down* was being flown back to Ballyhalbert from the fighter airfield at St Angelo in Co. Fermanagh when it crashed about three miles north-west of Lurgan, killing its Canadian pilot, 27 year-old Walter McManus.

The Belfast Telegraph Spitfires gave good service, one of them – *City of Derry* – even being flown by 315 (Deblinski) Squadron, a Free Polish squadron in the RAF.

Cartoons and thermometer showing fund raising progress Belfast Telegraph 1940

