

I was privileged to visit the Centrifuge building last week.

It was built in the 1950's and has been successfully training fast jet fighter pilots for the past 60+ years but is sadly to close in the near future. The building is surrounded by newly built modern homes and looks out of place. It is a listed building so hopefully will survive as it is such an important part of the U K' s and Farnborough's aviation history.

QinetiQ who run the building started the tour in the control room which overlooked the Centrifuge itself. A room full of steel cabinets which were packed full of wires, electrical components and control panels.

We moved into the centrifuge chamber where the centrifuge a massive 30 ft span of steel pipes with a gondola at either end. The gondolas fitted with Typhoon fighter jet seats.

The 30ft span looked like the arm of a crane. In the centre of the arm there are two seats where doctors sit and monitor the safety of the pilots experiencing G-forces.

Finally, we moved down into the plant room where the power is provided by a massive generator.

Surely an engineer's dream.

I came away thinking of James Bond and those magnificent men in their flying machines.

Thanks to the Farnborough Society for arranging this fantastic and interesting visit.

Richard Turner