

BRIEF OVERVIEW

The Central Register indexes all aerial survey cover of Wales flown by the RAF, Ordnance Survey and commercial aerial survey companies, and is a comprehensive source about aerial photography of Wales advising all interested users. The Assembly holds an extensive collection of aerial photographs covering Wales from 1940 to present day at a variety of scales.

BACKGROUND

The **Central Registers of Aerial Photographs** were set up to avoid the duplication of aerial cover by Local Authorities and Government Departments following the increase in use of Aerial Photography soon after WW2. The Ministry for Town and Country Planning utilised aerial photography in the absence of reliable up to-date mapping for post war planning and reconstruction, which led to the RAF flying the whole of the UK between 1945 & 1952 at a nominal 1:10,000 scale.

Once Ordnance Survey (OS) were up to speed with the mapping programme they began to take over the task of aerial photography (for civilian use) from the RAF around 1958. The RAF continued to fly (mainly for training purposes), and allowed access to their collection through the Joint Aerial Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre (JARIC) at RAF Brampton in Cambridge. After the prints had been used for mapping purposes, the OS passed them over to the planning departments of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG).

The prints were then held in the Drawing Office of the newly created Welsh Office (1964). Responsibility for the Central Register in Wales was transferred from the now Department of the Environment (DoE) to the Welsh Office, and all aerial film and prints held by the DoE in Acton were transferred to its present home at the Welsh Office building, now the Welsh Assembly Government in Cathays Park.

Aerial film from Meridian Air Maps Ltd (1952-84), the Ordnance Survey (1958-79) and the Royal Air Force (1946-75) are held at the Cathays Park Assembly Building, which is a recognised place of deposit by The National Archive. This archive of aerial photography is therefore available for public inspection, and (subject to copyright restrictions) copy prints are available for purchase. The archive has grown from 155,000 prints to approximately 350,000 prints over the last 25 years, with a database of over 3,500 sorties covering Wales since 1940.

THE COLLECTION

Extensive coverage of Wales flown by the RAF, Meridian and Ordnance Survey include:

- RAF National survey flown between 1945-52 at 10,000 scale, between the months of March and July.
- 1940-45 obliques of Welsh coastal regions and South Wales towns from RAF Medmenham.
- 1945-52 & 1959-61 obliques of the Welsh coastline.
- Ordnance Survey rectified photomaps of Glamorgan enlarged to 1:10,560 scale from 1949 RAF 1:29,000 scale originals.
- RAF National survey of 1969 at 1:60/62,000 scales flown during June and July.
- RAF National survey of 1981 at 1:50,000 scale flown in April and July-August.
- Pre-2001 OS photography at 1:7,000-1:24,000 scales, (including some South Wales coastline infra-red from the 1960's tide re-surveys at 1:20/25,000 scales).
- Meridian Airmaps Ltd from 1952-84 at scales of 1:3,000 to 1:15,000.

The Assembly continues to update the collection, which also includes extensive cover of Wales flown by:

- MAFF/ADAS (Various dates/scales in Colour and B/W)
- J.A.STORY (1983/84 - 1:10,000 Colour)
- RAF (1988/93 - 1:25/27,000 B/W)
- CUCAP (1991/92 - 1:10,000 Colour)
- GEONEX (1991/92 - 1:5/10,000 Colour)
- CARTOGRAPHICAL SERVICES (1993 - 1:6,000 Colour)
- BKS (1995 - 1:20,000 B/W)
- N.R.S.C. (1997 - 1:25,000 Colour)
- GEOINFORMATION (1999 Digital - 1:10,000 Colour)
- GETMAPPING (1999-2001 & 2004 Digital - 1:10,000+ Colour)
- ORDNANCE SURVEY (2002 - 1:8/9,000 Colour)
- COWI A/S (2006 Digital - 1:10,000+ Colour)

OUR SERVICE

Visitors are welcome by appointment once a site search has been carried out, for which a site map via letter, fax or e-mail is required. Searches are carried out manually using various scale paper maps, with a printout made available to customers. High resolution digital photographic prints and enlargements from Ordnance Survey, Meridian Airmaps Ltd. and RAF films and prints can be obtained on pre-payment. Dependent upon the individual site requested, the unit aims to respond to all search requests **within 10 working days**.

CHARGES

The search and use of the Aerial Photograph facility is free by way of prior appointment only.

Prints and enlargements are available at costs of:

1. RAF/Meridian at A4 - **£25** (£20 + £3.50 VAT + £1.50 P&P)
2. Ordnance Survey at A4 - **£30.88** (£20+ £5 Royalty + £4.38 VAT + £1.50 P&P)

- Duplicate prints are an additional £1.70 + VAT
- A3 prints are an additional £1.70 + VAT
- Scans copied to CD are an additional £1.70 + VAT
- Scans directly burned to CD are **£20-25** (+ VAT) per print

ADDRESS

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LINKS

The Archive Library maintains links with similar collections in:

England - <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.4510>

Scotland - <http://jura.rcahms.gov.uk/APF/start.jsp>

Wales - <http://www.rcahmw.org.uk/>