

Cars ready to race at Brooklands in 1930 with the Vickers aircraft factory in the background Brooklands Museum

The first ever British Grand Prix, won by the French duo Louis Wagner and Robert Sénéchal, was held at the Brooklands race track in Surrey in 1926.

The race lasted for a mammoth 110 laps (463km) with the winners speeding round in just over four hours. British driver Malcom Campbell came in second but finished ten minutes behind the Frenchmen.

This inaugural British Grand Prix is the pinnacle of a remarkable period in the history of the Brooklands site, which is now a museum open to the public. Since it was built in 1907 as the world's first purpose built circuit, the track has hosted the first motorcycle race, the first women's motor race, the first mass start cycling race and several world land speed records.

Around the same time, the aviation industry began to flourish at Brooklands with pioneers such as Tommy Sopworth learning to fly there. Some of the first long-distance flights that took off from Brooklands helped shape the routes we still use to get to Australia, South Africa and the USA today.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, racing stopped at Brooklands indefinitely and the site took on a major role manufacturing aircraft for the war effort. A Wellington Aircraft Hangar was installed on the race track's finishing straight and has remained there ever since.

We are now investing £4.7million of Lottery money in a major project that will recapture more of this incredible history for visitors. The Grade II listed Wellington Hangar will be dismantled, restored and re-erected as an ‘aircraft factory’ dedicated to teaching people about engineering. This will free up more of the original finishing straight which will be restored and used for large events and vintage car rides. The museum’s important collection of aircraft and significant archives will be displayed in a new purpose built annexe.

It is the most ambitious project ever undertaken by the museum and the new experiences are due to open in summer 2016.