



17 April 2013

MEMORIAL UNVEILED AT HALTON

As RAF Halton celebrates 100 years of flying from the estate, a memorial to thousands of airmen and women has been unveiled by the Station Commander, Group Captain Simon Harper.

The memorial, a steel figure of a Groundcrew person in overalls, is a tribute to the thousands of men and women who passed through RAF Halton for 77 years commencing with Aircraft Mechanic Trainees and followed by the No 1 School of Technical Training.



Mr Jon Kumela, the Airfield Manager at RAF Halton, conceived and designed the memorial. Himself a former Propulsion Technician, Jon completed his own training at RAF Halton leaving the RAF in 2008 having achieved the rank of Chief Technician. He said: *“I drew the figure to present the abiding stance that has come to represent RAF Groundcrew; in overalls with hands in pockets, standing in expectation of returning aircraft.”*

The memorial also serves to honour RAF Halton personnel killed whilst on flying duties from the Station airfield, all of whom will be named on separate plaques erected in the same setting:

On describing his intention for the sculpture Jon said: *“I hope that it will generate reflective pride, and through the words on the plaque encourage remembrance.”*

The location of the memorial at RAF Halton airfield is also of significance. Jon explained: *“The ‘Airfield’ still represents the culminating phase of Groundcrew training where knowledge and skill are applied in an up-to-date aircraft scenario and has, for every trainee since the earliest, signified the first opportunity to truly combine and test their abilities.”*

Group Captain Harper said: *“It’s a great pleasure to be able to commemorate the Groundcrew who used this airfield to train for many years, and for whom RAF Halton holds fond memories. Also, and importantly, the memorial commemorates those who regrettably lost their lives whilst*



flying from this location. Their contribution to the Royal Air Force and the country will not be forgotten."

Rather aptly, the memorial stands at the front of the airfield entrance, the figure looking toward the runway awaiting the return of aircraft. Made of steel plate, the figure was cut and erected by Mr Euan Cunningham, a renowned contemporary artist and sculptor in London who also attended the unveiling.

Those who lost their lives whilst flying from Halton are: Pilot Officer T. E. Whittome RAF, Mr A. R. Elliss, Wing Commander R.D. Speare DSO DFC CDG RAF, Wing Commander R.J.M. Bangay DFC BL RAF, Acting Corporal C.A. Parfett RAFP

AC1 G.A Richardson, Aircraftsman1 J. Montgomery, Aircraftsman1 M.G.Prince, Aircraftsman2 J.Hendry, Flying Officer B.R McClure RAF, Sergeant Technician Apprentice A. Choat RAF