

BOMBER COMMAND ASSOCIATION

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Dear Member

The Bomber Command Memorial - Good News

In my message in the Association's Autumn News Letter, I promised to keep you informed on progress with The Memorial. Save for the occasional and often incorrect article in the media, you will have begun to wonder "what the hell is going on". The short answer is - a lot of very detailed and often difficult work by a small and dedicated team which is determined to see the Memorial built before the start of the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations (and the 2012 Olympics). You will have to take my word for it, but the discussions have been both complex and time consuming.

I am delighted to say that at our meeting on 24 February, the Bomber Command Memorial Board was able to agree to proceed to contract for the construction of the Memorial. This is a momentous step forward and one which has been made possible through the drive of our President, the support of the Heritage Foundation; the sustained work of "our duo" at the RAF Museum, the professionalism of the architect and sculptor and importantly, the sheer energy of the fundraising team and our many supporters.

The architect and appointed contractor have done an excellent job to refine the design and costs, and we are now able to re-engage in discussions with Westminster City Council and the Royal Parks on the final detail. These necessary pre-contract discussions will probably take a further month, and once complete we will be able to announce the precise date for the Unveiling and Dedication Ceremony, which we intend to be in May 2012.

Many of you have asked when the Memorial will be unveiled, and I know that some of you living overseas will want to book flights, in order to be here on the day. Let me say this, during the 12 months that it will take to build the Memorial, we will have ample time to nail down the detailed plans and provide you with everything you need to know in order to join with friends, family and former colleagues for what will be a very special occasion. Before then our President will attend a short and discrete "Turf Cutting" Ceremony, probably in May 2011. This will define the start of building works and I will report on this in our Spring News Letter.

Cont'd

Website: www.rafbombercommand.co.uk

VICE PRESIDENTS

Air Vice Marshal Nigel B. Baldwin CB, CBE, FRAeS
Air Marshal Sir John Curtiss KCB, KBE, FRAeS, CBIM
Group Captain William L. Farquharson DFC*
Air Vice Marshal Norman Hoad CVO, CBE, AFC*

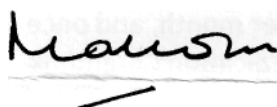
Squadron Leader Tony Iveson DFC, AE, CRAeS
Air Vice Marshal Eric Macey OBE
The Lord Mackie of Benshie CBE, DSO, DFC, LLD

I am delighted to add that in February, the Chief of the Air Staff was able to view the third of the seven "larger-than-life figures" of the Second World War airmen which will form the centrepiece of the Memorial. Each figure more than 3m tall, and sculpted in clay by our sculptor Philip Jackson, will be cast in bronze. Philip's previous works include the Memorials to HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother on the Mall, and Sir Bobby Moore at Wembley Stadium. Philip's brief was that the sculpture should be neither jingoistic nor triumphalist, but reflective; and hence it depicts a crew just back from their mission. The developing statue is magnificent and should be completed later this year and well ahead of the Unveiling.

The architect Liam O'Connor, best known for the design and construction of the Commonwealth Memorial Gates on Constitution Hill, London has created a design which will gradually unfold from the current park railings, to engraved screens (including the RAF and Bomber Command Crests), and carved Portland stone walls enclosing the bronze sculpture. It will also feature a glass roof including sections of melted down aluminium from a Halifax bomber (Halifax LW682 from Number 426 Squadron), shot down over Belgium on the night of 12 May 1944, in which eight crew were killed.

The Memorial Board believes that once complete the Bomber Command Memorial will provide a fitting and lasting memory for generations to come. It will insure that we never forget the debt we owe to the commitment, service and sacrifice of those airmen of Bomber Command who lost their lives in pursuit of peace and freedom in Europe.

Finally, none of this would have been possible without your magnificent support and the generous response from key benefactors and donors from across the UK, and around the world. I promise to keep you updated as we make progress, and progress we will, but in the meantime thank you for your patience and loyal support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Malcolm White", written over a light blue horizontal line. A short horizontal stroke is drawn below the signature.

Malcolm White
Chairman