

**KINGSTON AVIATION HERITAGE TRUST**

**Charity No. 1068247**

**CLOSING REPORT**

## **1. CLOSING THE TRUST**

1.1 The Trustees having considered that all the Objectives have been fulfilled have produced this report to document the achievements described below and allow them to formally close the Trust at a meeting of the Trustees.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

### 2.1 Original Objective

The Trustees shall hold the trust fund and its income upon trust to apply for the following object (“the object”) in The Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames (“the area of benefit”) To establish permanent visible commemoration of the historic achievements of Kingston’s aviation industry between 1912 and 1992 which contributes notably to the Nation’s defence and economy. This is to be realised by the erection of a Town-Centre memorial to the four “Founding Fathers” (Sir T.O.M. Sopwith, Fred Sigrist, Harry Hawker and Sir Sydney Camm) and the workforce in general, by the mounting of plaques at significant sites, by the display of photographs, maps etc., in appropriate buildings to which the public have access and in such other ways as the Trustees may determine.

### 2.2 Amended Objectives

The Original Objective was amended in January 1998 as follows:-

The Trustees shall hold the Trust Fund and its income upon trust to apply for the following object (“the object”) in The Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames (“the area of benefit”) for the advancement of the education of the public in the subject of Kingston’s aviation industry between 1912 and 1992, in particular concerning the industry’s historic achievements and the contribution made by the industry to the defence and economy of the United Kingdom, by erecting a memorial in the town-centre of the area of benefit commemorating the four “Founding Fathers” (Sir T.O.M. Sopwith, Fred Sigrist, Harry Hawker and Sir Sydney Camm) and the workforce in general, by mounting commemorative plaques at significant sites, by the display of maps, photographs and other material in appropriate buildings to which the public have access and in such other ways as the Trustees may determine.

Amendment 2 was proposed and agreed by the Trustees on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013 as follows:-

Delete “... a memorial in the town-centre of the area of benefit“ ” and

Insert “...a memorial in the Hawker Centre, located in the area of benefit”

## 2.3 Charity Commissioners Acceptance of Amendment 2

**From:** FC Email Team <fcemailteam@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk>  
**To:** johnnygough@btinternet.com  
**Sent:** Friday, 7 June 2013, 12:53  
**Subject:** RE:The Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust - 1068247 CC:04764708

Dear Mr Gough,

Thank you for your email dated 18 May 2013 and for kindly providing us with a full copy of the charity's Declaration of Trust. I have placed a copy of this on our records for the charity.

I thought it would be helpful to advise you that we note the proposed amendment the charity wishes to make to Clause B, the objects clause. I would confirm to you that we would have no objection to the trustee's proposal. Therefore in accordance with Clause U(1)(a) of the charity's Declaration of Trust this email can be taken as providing the prior written consent of the Commission so that the charity's objects clause shall now read:

**"The trustees shall hold the trust fund and its income upon trust to apply them for the following object ("the object") in the Royal Borough of Kingston-Upon-Thames ("the area of benefit") for the advancement of the education of the public in the subject of Kingston's aviation industry ("the industry") between the years 1912 and 1992, in particular concerning the industry's historic achievements and the contribution made by the industry to the defence and economy of the United Kingdom, by erecting a memorial in the Hawker Centre, located in the area of benefit, commemorating the four 'Founding Fathers' of the industry (Sir T.O.M. Sopwith, Fred Sigrist, Harry Hawker and Sir Sydney Camm), and the industry's workforce in general, also by mounting commemorative plaques at other significant sites, by the display of maps, photographs and other material in appropriate buildings to which the public have access, and in such other ways as the Trustees may determine".**

As this email is providing the legal consent of the Commission we would suggest that a copy of it is kept with the charity's records.

In order to make the amendment the trustees should follow the provisions contained in Clause U(2) of the Declaration of Trust. Once the trustees have drawn up a suitable Supplemental Deed, you can advise us by completing and submitting our online Charity Amendments form, a link to which I provide below:

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/notify-us-of-changes/get-our-permission/change-your-governing-document/>

This also provides you with a facility to upload the Supplemental Deed.

I hope the above is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

Jim Gerrard

Charity Commission - First Contact

Very often the fastest way to answer your enquiries will be to look on our website [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk), especially the Frequently Asked Questions covering the main issues that we are being asked about. You will also find the latest news, together with our publications and guidance including our new Trustee Handbook which contains essential information for new trustees. You can even sign up for email updates.



### **3. ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Trustees consider that they have fulfilled the Amended Objectives by achieving the following activities, in chronological order, either by the Trust itself or in conjunction with other like minded organisations.

- ✘ Kingston Aviation Memorial Plaque in YMCA Hawker Centre
- ✘ Glass Panels in YMCA Hawker Centre
- ✘ Picture Gallery in YMCA Hawker Centre
- ✘ Memorial Bust of Sir Sydney Camm CBE Hon FRAeS
- ✘ History Plaques in Richmond Road
- ✘ Sopwith Tabloid Floatplane Replica
- ✘ Canbury Park Road Memorial Plaques
- ✘ Talks at Tiffin School
- ✘ Memorial Bust of Sir Thomas Sopwith CBE Hon FRAeS
- ✘ The Brooklands Tabloid by the Thames

## KINGSTON AVIATION MEMORIAL PLAQUE

### IN YMCA HAWKER CENTRE

Now positioned at the entrance hall of the Hawker Centre by kind permission of the YMCA Directors (South), is a memorial plaque depicting Sopwith, Sigrist, Hawker and Camm, the four founding fathers of the Sopwith/Hawker/British Aerospace enterprise. It also shows six representative types of the famous Kingston aircraft. (Handover document at Appx 1).

Designed and modelled by Ambrose Barber, and cast in bronze the plaque pays specific tribute to the thousands of local men and women who helped to design and produce some 47,000 aircraft for Sopwiths, Hawkers and BAe at Kingston and their supporting factories and sub-contractors.



## GLASS PANELS IN YMCA HAWKER CENTRE

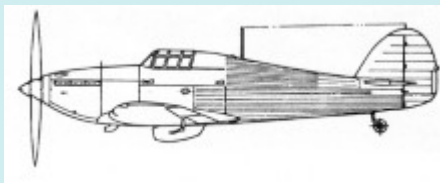
The YMCA South, who took over the management of the Centre in 1999 on a 20 year lease from the Royal Borough Of Kingston upon Thames, wanted to keep the thread of association going with the Hawker factory. They commissioned these glass panels which can viewed by all who visit the YMCA Hawker Centre and they form part of the wall of the Dance Studio. Hawker Association continue to hold their monthly meetings in the room adjacent to the Dance Studio. Unfortunately due to lighting problems it has not been possible to photograph the panels.

From 1948 to 1992 the Hawker Centre was the Athletic & Social Club for the aircraft factory next door, now a housing development



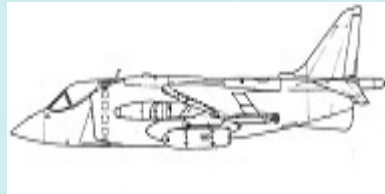
Sopwith Aviation used the factory in 1918 and 1919 to build fighters. After WW1 the factory was bought by Leyland Motors.

In Kingston, Sopwith Aviation's successor, Hawker Aircraft produced many famous aircraft including the Hurricane



In 1949 Hawker purchased the factory and produced Hunter jet fighters.

As Hawker Siddeley Aviation and British Aerospace the factory developed the Harrier "jump-jet" and the Hawk trainer It closed in 1992



The YMCA Hawker Centre is all that remains of the factory and is a reminder of the important part Kingston played in British aviation history

YMCA London South (a charity that has served the Kingston community since 1874) took on the management of the Centre in 1999 in partnership with RBK

Offering fitness and sports facilities as well as a wide range of children's activities the Centre is open to all and is inclusive Fitness initiative accredited.

## PICTURE GALLERY IN YMCA HAWKER CENTRE

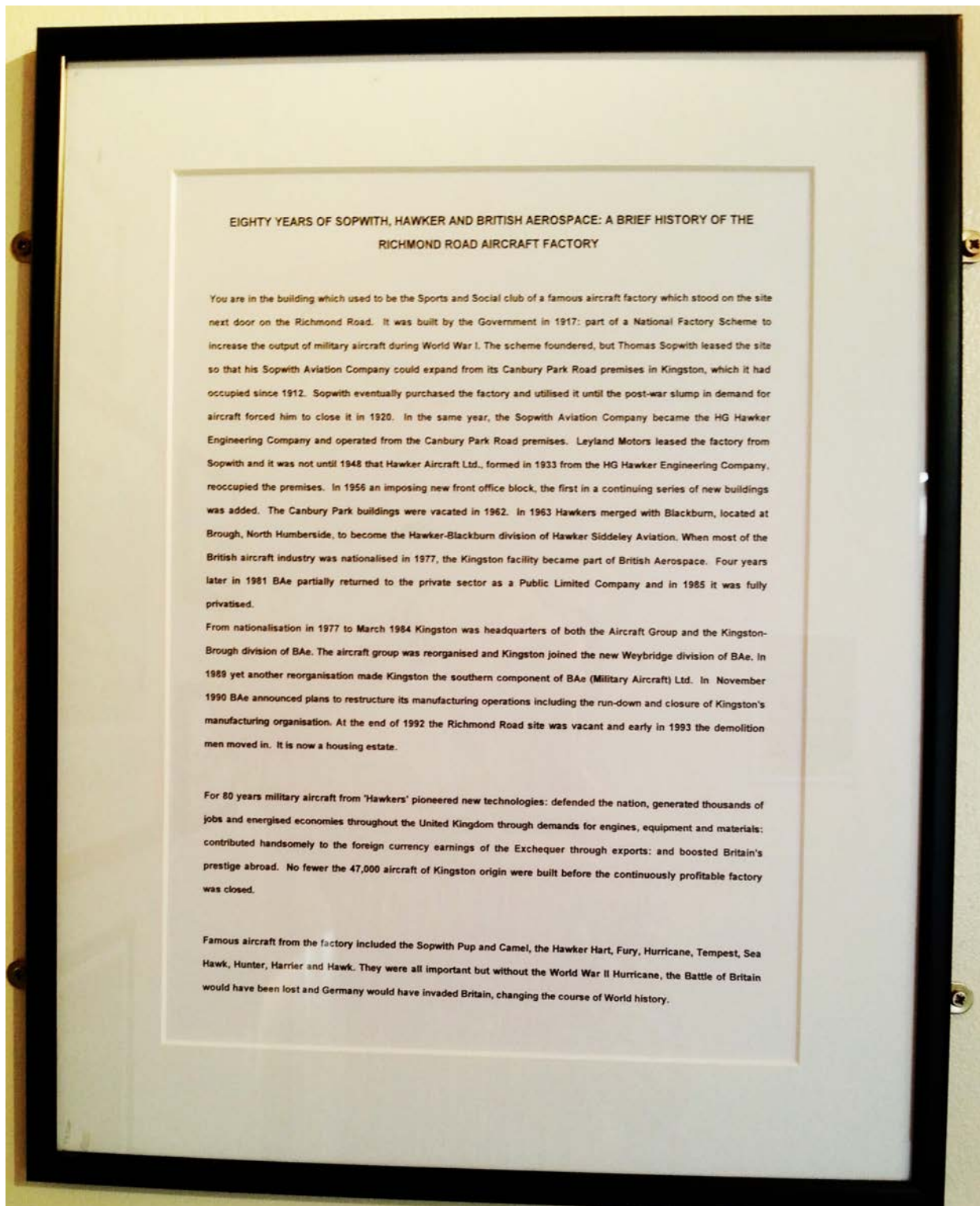
The pictures in the gallery shown below were presented by British Aerospace to YMCA when they took over the management of the Hawker Centre. The pictures used to hang in the main room where the Hawker Association held its monthly meetings. The Dance Studio, when it was developed, was not an appropriate place for the pictures to hang and so the YMCA has created this picture gallery on the wall opposite the Memorial Plaque at the entrance of the Centre.

The centrepiece of the gallery is a picture painted by Mark Bromley of a Harrier GR Mk1, Sea Harrier and a Harrier GR Mk3 flying over the Richmond Road factory and signed by ex-BAe employees who worked on the Harrier project.

The other pictures clockwise from the top are a Sopwith Camel, Hawker Tempest, BAe Hawk, Richmond Road factory in 1956, Hawker Hunter and a Hurricane.



Alongside the picture gallery on an adjacent wall is a framed document providing a Brief History of the Richmond Road factory.



## MEMORIAL BUST OF SIR SYDNEY CAMM CBE Hon FRAeS

To celebrate the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Sir Sydney Camm who designed in Kingston the HAWKER HURRICANE, mainstay of the fighter squadrons that defeated Hitler in the Battle of Britain, a life-size bronze bust of Sir Sydney Camm was unveiled in Kingston Library on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

This Bronze was sculpted by Ambrose Barber, a pilot, ex British Aerospace executive and Chairman of the Hawker Association, who has taken up sculpture in his retirement and has throughout given his services freely to the Trust.

After an introduction by Grace McElwee, Head of Kingston Library & Heritage Service, Leslie Palmer, Chairman of the Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust, handed over the ownership documents. (See documents at Appx 2)



**Grace McElwee**



**Grace McElwee & Leslie Palmer**

There is now a magnificent memorial on permanent public display in Kingston's main Public Library beside the entrance to the Museum



**Sir Sydney Camm**

## HISTORY PLAQUES IN RICHMOND ROAD

Kindly facilitated by Councillor David Cunningham JP and the Hawker Association, two stainless steel history plaques have been positioned at the corner of Dukes Avenue and Richmond Road. The plaques give a brief history of “The Great Aircraft Factory” as the site was once known. The factory closed in 1992 and is now a housing development.



## SOPWITH TABLOID FLOATPLANE REPLICA

On 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013 an event was held at the Brooklands Museum to hand over a Sopwith "Tabloid" replica on the centenary of the first flight, at Brooklands, of the original.

Funded by the Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust (KAHT), set up to commemorate the achievements of the Kingston aviation industry, and built by Steve Green at Brooklands with help from Kingston University, this Tabloid fitted with floats was the first British aircraft to win a major international competition, namely the 1914 Schneider Trophy race at Monaco. After the race it also set the world speed record. It was flown by Howard Pixton as Harry Hawker, the Sopwith test and competition pilot, was demonstrating the first "Tabloid", a landplane, in his homeland of Australia. Because of its compact dimensions the aircraft was nicknamed after a Burroughs and Welcome medicinal tablet but the name stuck and was adopted by Sopwith.

The centenary event was attended by a large number of celebrities associated with the "Tabloid" replica, the KAHT, the Hawker Association (HA) and the Brooklands Museum. The "Tabloid" was set up in front of the Club House together with the Museum's Sopwith "Camel" and near to the Hawker P1127. The replica has been left uncovered on one side so that the lightweight, clean design can be appreciated as can Steve Green's immaculate craftsmanship.

Museum Director Allan Winn gave the introductory address followed by Leslie Palmer, Chairman of the KAHT and Ambrose Barber HA Chairman and KAHT Trustee. The replica's documents were handed over to Alistair Pugh, representing the Museum Trustees by Sir Thomas Sopwith's son, the 'young' Tommy who was presented with a print of a painting by Kai Choi of the "Tabloid" over Monaco. Stella Pixton, Howard's daughter and Cathy Dinsdale, Harry Hawker's grand daughter were also presented with prints. (See handover documents at Appx 3)



**Allan Winn**



**Leslie Palmer**



**Ambrose Barber**



**Tommy Sopwith & Alistair Pugh**



**Tommy Sopwith & Allan Winn**



**Stella Pixton & Allan Winn**



**Allan Winn & Cathy Dinsdale**



**Steve Green**



**Floatplane showing uncovered structure**



**Barry Pegram, Tommy Sopwith, Ambrose Barber, Leslie Palmer**

## CANBURY PARK ROAD MEMORIAL PLAQUES

The Residents Associations of Sopwith House and Sigrist Square in Canbury Park Road in conjunction with Kingston Council wished to commemorate the fact that their houses are built on the site of the Sopwith Aviation factory. In fact the original Head Office of Sopwith Aviation and its successor company Hawker Aircraft, now named Sopwith House, is part of the development.

The plaques were designed by David Hassard, Joint Leader of the Kingston Aviation Centenary Project, and mounted on entrance pillars to the two housing developments. They are directly across the road from Siddeley House, the original buildings of Hawker Aircraft where the first Hurricane was built.

On 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013 the two plaques shown below were unveiled by Cllr David Glasspool (Lead Member of Royal Borough of Kingston Council responsible for Arts, Leisure and Heritage) commemorating the fact that thousands of Sopwith and Hawker aircraft were designed and built in Canbury Park Road.





**David Hassard and Cllr David Glasspool**



**Scott Herbertson Chris Farara Bill Downey Grace McElwee  
David Hassard Cllr David Glasspool Glenn Keywood  
Cllr Geoff Austin Cllr Patrick Codd Cllr Andrea Craig**

## TALKS AT TIFFIN SCHOOL

In order to raise some money for casting the bust of Sir Thomas Sopwith, KAHT arranged two talks on the evening of 17<sup>th</sup> September in the Cyril Judge Lecture Theatre at Tiffin School, Kingston upon Thames with the kind permission of Hilda Clarke, Head of Tiffin School and help of John King who was Deputy Head and is now the Archivist. Mike French opened the proceedings by outlining the aims of the Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust and requesting everyone to donate generously.

The first talk entitled Kingston's Aviation History in WW1 was given by David Hassard B.Tech C Eng FIET, Kingston Aviation Centenary Project Joint Leader and dedicated Sopwith Historian.

The second talk about The Development of the Harrier was given by Chris Roberts FRAeS, former Hawker/BAe Chief Test Pilot who joined Hawkers following RAF service as a fighter pilot and Red Arrow pilot.

The evening was a great success and over £300 was raised which enabled KAHT to make the final payment for the manufacture of the bust which was unveiled at Kingston Library on the 18th September.



**Mike French, Chris Roberts and David Hassard**



**Heinz Frick and Chris Roberts**



**John King & Hilda Clarke**



**Heinz Frick, Frank Rainsborough and Chris Roberts**



**Part of the audience**

## **MEMORIAL BUST OF SIR THOMAS SOPWITH CBE Hon FRAeS**

On 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014, before an invited audience, a bronze bust of Brooklands aviation pioneer Sir Thomas Sopwith was unveiled in Kingston Library. After an introduction by Chief Librarian Grace McElwee, Kingston's Heritage Councillor, David Glasspool, spoke on the importance of the example set by Sir Thomas, engineer and entrepreneur, to today's young people. Before cutting the red ribbon and unveiling the bust, Sir Thomas's son, Tommy Sopwith, shared some memories of his father with the gathering.

Representing the Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust who funded the casting Ambrose Barber, sculptor of the bust, handed over the ownership documents to Cllr Glasspool for the Kingston Museum and Heritage Service. Sadly Leslie Palmer, Chairman of the KAHT, was unable to attend. (See handover documents at Appx 4).



**Cllr David Glasspool, Grace McElwee, Ambrose Barber, Tommy Sopwith**



**Sir T.O.M. Sopwith**

The Sopwith bust is paired in the Library with the bust of Sir Sydney Camm, Sopwith's friend and Chief Designer. Beside each bust is a panel giving a brief biography of these leaders of Britain's aviation industry.



**Sir T.O.M. Sopwith      and      Sir Sydney Camm**



**Mike French**

**Leslie Palmer**

**Chris Roberts**

**Barry Pegram**

**John Gough**

**Ambrose Barber**

## THE BROOKLANDS MUSEUM TABLOID BY THE THAMES

The Sopwith seaplane 'replica' was the centrepiece in Canbury Gardens on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at an event to unveil a plaque commemorating 100 years of aviation in Kingston upon Thames and to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Thames Landscape Strategy Project to protect, promote and improve the natural and man-made riverside environment between Hampton and Kew.

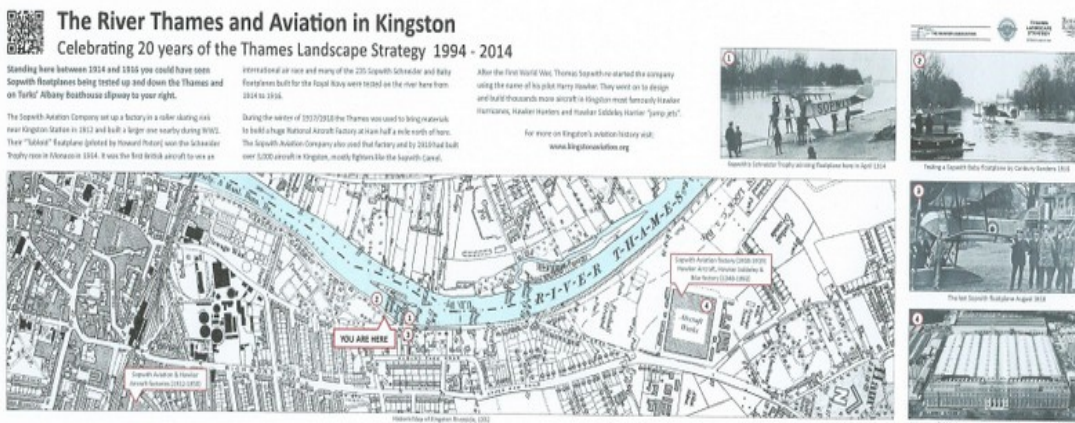
The many guests and visitors were entertained by the Surrey Yeomanry band while they sipped wine and viewed the exhibition panels explaining the history of Sopwith and Hawker.

Following introductory remarks by Jason Debney of the Thames Landscape Strategy Project and David Hassard, the Kingston Aviation Centenary Project leader, the plaque was unveiled by Tommy Sopwith, Sir Thomas's son, after he had given a short and entertaining speech about his father and the Sopwith company.

Also present were Stella Pixton, daughter of Howard who flew the Tabloid to win the Schneider Trophy in 1914, and members of the Pixton and Hawker families, Kingston Deputy Mayor Cathy Roberts and Councillor David Cunningham.

Group photographs were taken beside the Tabloid which was positioned on the slipway in front of the Albany Boathouse (now owned by Creed-Miles) where the original was launched into the Thames for taxying trials. It later flew from the Thames downstream near Teddington.

The event was supported by the Kingston Council, Kingston Aviation Centenary Project, Father Thames Trust, Canbury and Riverside Association, Hawker Association, Brooklands Museum and Creed-Miles and Co..



## The Lectern in Canbury Gardens



The floatplane on the slipway in front of the Albany Boathouse as in 1914.



Ken Gillett, Tommy Sopwith & Steve Green



#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The monumental contribution to the world of Military Aviation made by the Sopwith dynasty has now been, in a very humble way, recorded at five key locations in the Borough for present and future generations by the creation of visual tributes to those remarkable men who laid the foundations of the Sopwith, Hawker and British Aerospace companies at Brooklands, Kingston and Dunsfold.

The founding fathers, Sopwith, Sigrist, Hawker and Camm designed and had built military aircraft which were to make aviation history. In the periods of two World Wars their aircraft made an indisputable contribution to bringing victory to U.K. and our Allies.

The creativity of these men and their workforce during the 80 years that manufacture was located at Kingston upon Thames produced such iconic aircraft as the Sopwith Pup, the Hurricane, the Hunter, the Hawk and the unique Harrier Jump Jet to name only some of the many thousand aircraft that left the factory gates.

The Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust selected and had created tributes that honour the men and women who worked in the industry and the Trustees feel appropriate respect has been paid with the creation of the tributes detailed in this report.

The Tributes are a testimony to what has gone before and all are available to the public to enjoy and learn from.

Special thanks are due to the following for invaluable assistance given to our project.

The involved Royal Borough of Kingston Councillors and the Heritage Staff.

The Director s and Staff of the Hawker Centre YMCA

The Director of Brooklands Museum and the superb group of volunteers led by Steven Green who created the Sopwith Tabloid Floatplane.

The Hawker Association.

The Kingston Aviation Centenary Project.

The Charity Commissioners.

Ambrose Barber, Chairman of the Hawker Association who gave countless hours of his time to create the bronze tributes featured in this report.

The Trustees of the Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust who kept this undertaking alive despite many setbacks.

The Financial Donors who made all this possible, without your generous support nothing could have been achieved.

I am honoured to have been part of this undertaking and happy that we have left a legacy for all to enjoy.

L.A.Palmer,TD,

Chairman.







## The Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust

### MEMORIAL BUST OF SIR THOMAS SOPWITH CBE, Hon FRAeS

The Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust was formed some years ago, and is a Registered Charity with educational aims to raise public recognition and commemoration of the aeronautical prowess of the thousands of local men and women who helped to design and produce aeroplanes for Sopwith's, Hawkers and British Aerospace at Kingston and its supporting factories and sub-contractors, thereby contributing to the Nation's defence and economy during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It follows that the Trust wishes to promote wider local recognition of the key role of Sir Thomas Sopwith, British aviation pioneer, in laying the foundation of Kingston's proud aircraft industry by the creation first of Sopwith Aviation and later the Hawker Siddely Group. To this end, a life-size bust of Sir Thomas has been sculpted in clay by Ambrose Barber, signed and dated 2014. The Kingston Aviation Heritage Trust has funded the casting of this design in bronze at the Talos Art Foundry at Quarley, Hampshire.

The Trustees have on record their wish that this bronze of Sir Thomas be put on permanent display in the area of benefit in the Trust's Governing Document (clause B). The Trustees welcome the kind acceptance of the Royal Borough of Kingston Library and Heritage Services to display the bust at Kingston Library. Therefore, as hereby recorded, this bust is handed over by Ambrose Barber, on behalf of the Trust Chairman L.A. Palmer Esq. TD and his fellow Trustees, to the Royal Borough of Kingston Library and Heritage Services whose property it now becomes.



*Ambrose Barber*

A.C.Barber, FRAeS  
Trustee and sculptor  
on behalf of the  
Kingston Aviation Heritage  
Trust.

Date 25<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2014

*Grace McElwee*

Grace McElwee  
Strategic Manager  
Sopwith bust received,  
on behalf of the Royal  
Borough of Kingston  
Library and Heritage Services.

Date 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014

Registered Charity  
Number 1068247