



The Air Transport Auxiliary flies again.

On the 10th July 2010 which was the 70th anniversary of the start of the 'Battle of Britain' the A.T.A. Hamble-le-Rice Memorial was unveiled before a huge crowd and representatives from the A.T.A., RAF Association, RAF Cadets and the Royal British Legion. The Memorial was created by a partnership from BP, GE Aviation and Hamble-le-Rice Parish Council.

The Ceremony was brought to order by the St Andrews Pipe Band. Speeches were made by Ken MacCallum (BP), Todd Powers (GE Aviation), Mike Davies (HPC) and Peter Garrod who is the Commodore of the A.T.A. Association. The Memorial was unveiled by the entire A.T.A representation: Mary Ellis, Maggie Frost, Peter Garrod, Peter George, Annette Hill, Joy Lofthouse, Rosemary Seccombe and Freydis Sharland. Father John Travers from St Andrew's Church in Hamble blessed the Memorial before wreaths were laid. The unveiling ceremony was brought to a close with a double flypast by Joe Dible and Owen Watts in the last remaining Foster Wikner Wicko which was previously owned by Phillipa Bennett and Lettice Curtis who were war time A.T.A. pilots stationed Hamble Ferry Pool 15.

Peter Garrod said, "It is sad but inevitable that there are so few lady members of ATA surviving today to see this splendid tribute which BP; the skilled craftsmen of GE Aviation; and Hamble Parish Council have created together in their memory. So appropriate, too, that it depicts a Spitfire, not only because of its strong association with this part of Hampshire, but also because, so many being built, it is the aircraft most likely to feature strongly in any ATA pilots logbook, and almost certainly in those of the women pilots of 15 Ferry Pool based here at Hamble".

The initial idea for the Hamble-le-Rice ATA Memorial was proposed by Tony Bray of Netley to BP Oil UK Ltd (Hamble-le-Rice)) and the Hamble-le-Rice Parish Council in the autumn of 2008. In 2009 GE Aviation (Hamble-le-Rice) welcomed the opportunity to show their engineering expertise to manufacture the 1 metre wing spanned Spitfire from aluminium which was kindly donated by Thyssen Krupp Aerospace. GE Aviation enlisted the willing assistance of Justin Adams of spitfire3d.com who generously donated his time and expertise to produce diagrams of the Spitfire from which the programmers could establish the cuts using their machines. After the initial engineering, the fuselage and wing sections were precisely joined and then Spitfire was meticulously polished following hours and hours of skilled labour.

The team at GE Aviation who manufactured the Spitfire for the Memorial are Chris Apletree, Bob Attree, Pauline Bower, Adam Harfield, Dan Hickman, Chris Hodson, Mike Neave, Pete Newcombe, Todd Powers, Phil Ratcliffe, Ian Russell, John Savage, Danny Small, Martin Stratton, Ben Sutton, Derek Walbridge, Pete Williams.

The Welsh slate rock base for the Memorial was sourced after extensive hunting for the suitable piece by at Silverland Stone in Fair Oak, Eastleigh.

The creation of the Memorial would not have been possible without the willing participation of numerous individuals who are all acknowledged along with full information about the Memorial on the official A.T.A. Memorial website www.atamemorial.org.uk

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