



'AETHERIS AVIDI'

EAGER FOR THE AIR

**IN HONOUR OF THE COURAGEOUS MEN AND WOMEN OF THE
AIR TRANSPORT AUXILIARY**

The ATA was formed at the outbreak of war in September 1939 to transport mail, dispatches and essential supplies. It quickly developed to ferry new, damaged and repaired aircraft between the aviation industry and the RAF and Fleet Air Arm airfields. The ATA delivered all types of newly built operational aircraft and flew others in need of repair. Between September 1939 and November 1945 the ATA flew 309,011 aircraft missions.

The fledgling ATA consisted of just a few dozen men, with eight women joining shortly after. The wartime strength of ATA pilots was in excess of 1200, including 168 women. It employed able bodied and disabled people from 28 countries. They all performed the same duties, and they all received equal pay and rights. Tragically 173 ATA personnel were killed on duty.

This memorial marks the entrance to the Hamble-le-Rice Airfield, and to the ATA Ferry Pool which by 1941 had become an all female unit.

The Hamble-le-Rice ATA memorial unveiled on the 70th anniversary of the

Battle of Britain, 10th July 2010

This memorial was created by

**BP Oil UK Ltd (Hamble-le-Rice)
GE Aviation (Hamble-le-Rice)
Hamble-le-Rice Parish Council**

With the assistance of the Air Transport Auxiliary Association, Eastleigh Borough Council, Maidenhead Heritage Centre (ATA museum), RAF Museum, ThyssenKrupp Aerospace, Justin Adams and Tony Bray.