

16<sup>th</sup> August 2018

## The Farnborough Society Honours Sir Hugh Trenchard, ‘Father of the Royal Air Force’



The Farnborough Society’s campaign to rename a road on Farnborough Airport after a First World War hero and British Army officer instrumental in helping to set up the RAF a century ago finally came to fruition on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

Guests, including Brandon O’Reilly, CEO of TAG Farnborough, and Peter Hurst, Chairman of The Farnborough Society, gathered, in pouring rain, for a special ceremony as the Mayor of Rushmoor, Councillor Steve Masterson, unveiled the new nameplate as the Southern Access Road was renamed Trenchard Way in honour of Sir Hugh Trenchard (1873-1956).

Known as “The Father of the Royal Air Force”, Trenchard was largely responsible for setting up the new, independent, Royal Air Force following the success of the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) in the First World War. The Headquarters of the RFC, Britain’s first military air arm, was based at Farnborough from 1912, and Trenchard was tasked with bringing together the flying squadrons sent to the Western Front. The original RFC headquarters, beside Farnborough Road, is now the home of the Farnborough Air Sciences Trust (FAST) which adopted the name Trenchard House when it opened as a museum in 2003.

The idea to rename the road came from founder member and one-time member of the Executive Committee Brian Thomas, who sadly died before seeing it realised, but was taken up by The Farnborough Society on behalf of his widow, Tricia, who was unfortunately prevented from attending the ceremony by ill-health.

When the society’s Secretary, Councillor Barbara Hurst, put forward the suggestion three years ago, there was strong support from Rushmoor Borough Council, TAG Farnborough Airport and then local MP Sir Gerald Howarth. It was therefore decided that plans to mark the centenaries of both the end of the First World War and the foundation of the RAF in 2018 should include the creation of Trenchard Way.

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Tricia Thomas said: “Although Brian sadly didn’t live to see Trenchard Way come into being, I am very proud that his idea to honour Sir Hugh Trenchard in this way has become a reality in 2018, the centenary of the foundation of the RAF.”

The Mayor of Rushmoor, Councillor Steve Masterson, said: “It was a real pleasure for me to unveil this road sign in honour of Sir Hugh, particularly in a year when we celebrate the centenary of the RAF, as he was a key figure in its formation.

“We are very grateful to everyone who worked so hard to make this happen, and to TAG for jointly funding the project.”

Speaking on behalf of The Farnborough Society, Councillor Hurst said: “I am delighted that Trenchard Way is now a permanent, highly visible, acknowledgement of the importance of Sir Hugh Trenchard in Farnborough’s story, and indeed in Britain’s aviation history.

“I am particularly grateful to Brandon O’Reilly and TAG Farnborough for their support.”