



**Patron: His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales KG KT GCB OM**  
**Vice President: Air Vice-Marshal Lord Beaverbrook**

**Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon GCB CBE FRAeS RAF**  
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29<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

His Royal Highness  
The Prince of Wales, KG, KT, GCB, OM  
Clarence House  
London SW1A IBA

*Your Royal Highness,*

I have the honour to report on the activities of the Cranwellian Association over the past two years.

As Your Royal Highness will appreciate, these have been challenging times for the Association. The pandemic has not only forced the cancellation of several events, but has also prevented our involvement in activities at the College, which has been in virtually permanent lockdown to minimise risk of Covid infections. Nevertheless, our membership remains strong at over 600, and we have managed to deliver several successes in spite of the restrictions, notably a major initiative to celebrate the centenary of the arrival of the first cadets at Cranwell in 1920.

A few years ago, the membership decided that of several options, a statue of Lord Hugh Trenchard would be the most appropriate permanent tribute to the man who was not only one of the founding fathers of the Royal Air Force, but was also the inspiration behind the four building blocks which ensured its future as an independent service: The Royal Air Force College at Cranwell; the Apprentice Training Centre at Halton; the Staff College at Andover; and the Central Flying School at Upavon. Following a rigorous selection process, we chose the well-respected sculptor, Vivien Mallock, to undertake the work. After a successful campaign to raise the necessary funds, we were able to install her splendid statue in the College grounds in September of the centenary year. Unfortunately, owing to Covid restrictions, this had to be conducted with just a few Association representatives, but we were very fortunate that the current Viscount Hugh Trenchard was able to join us as our guest of honour. A formal unveiling was possible this year, when over 150 Cranwellians and guests, including descendants of the founding fathers, enjoyed a most pleasant ceremony over the Reunion weekend. I enclose a few photographs recording the development of the Statue and the unveiling ceremony.



Your Royal Highness will also be pleased to hear that we have made significant progress in maturing our Association website, which this year was completely redesigned to make it more attractive and user friendly. A key feature of the revised content is the links to two heritage and history websites run by two Cranwellians as independent enterprises. We feel strongly that a key role of the Association is to preserve the ethos, traditions and heritage of our Service, and I believe we are making an important contribution to this endeavour through the thoroughly professional efforts of our two colleagues. I have provided links to examples separately to your office should you wish to see them.

I have mentioned previously that a major initiative in the Royal Air Force, the Astra project, which inter alia is planned to include an all-ranks alumni trust is in process. We are fully engaged in the development of this charitable trust, which could have implications for the future of our Association, especially in the recruitment of new members to what will remain by its very nature- an officers' association. I am intent however, that the Cranwell name will remain as a prominent reminder to all members of the Royal Air Force of our core values and history, and we intend to play our full part in the successful introduction and delivery of the Service's vision.

In summary, despite the challenges of the pandemic, your Association is in good heart and we are proud of our recent accomplishments. On behalf of all members may I send our loyal greetings and wish you and your family a peaceful and happy Christmas,

Yours sincerely,

Michael Gwynne

