



Editorial

This year has been the Centenary of the RAF's formation and, while little about that event has been mentioned in this journal, our Committee have been working to ensure that the event is commemorated. I had thought of mentioning the work done but considered it better to ask our President, Peter Dye who has been co-ordinating matters, to provide a summary. Peter writes:

For the past four years the town of St-Omer has put considerable effort into celebrating its links with the United Kingdom forged during the First World War. The British Air Services Memorial erected by the Society and maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (funded through our annual calendar sales) has featured in several commemorative events since 2014.

In June, a special exhibition was unveiled at *La Chapelle des Jesuites* (close to the town square) presenting the history of the RFC and RAF in the St-Omer region. This outstanding exhibition only lasts until the end of September, although it is hoped that it might find a permanent home. A smaller exhibition about the first war in the air can be found at *La Coupelle* (the V2 site at nearby Wizernes).

The Society has helped St-Omer with the research for their exhibition and provided detail on all the First World War airfields in the local area (as part of the ongoing project to map every RFC/RNAS/RAF airfield on the Western Front). This collaboration has proved very productive in helping to identify items recovered from RFC airfields and, most recently, a mural discovered in one of the many buildings used by the RFC at Longuenesse – the site of No 1 Aircraft Depot – still surviving after more than a century.

In August, the Mayor of St-Omer asked if the Society could provide a plaque, to be unveiled at the British Air Services Memorial, as part of the official ceremony to commemorate the Centenary of the RAF. The committee agreed to support the proposal and has commissioned a



Part of the exhibit at *La Chapelle des Jesuites*, St-Omer.

bronze plaque from Malcolm Lane Ltd (who produced the castings for the original Memorial). This will be unveiled by the Mayor, together with British and French senior air force officers, on 20 September 2018, exactly 100 years since the last operational RAF squadron left St-Omer – after nearly four years of fighting.

We are delighted to support St-Omer in this endeavour and to play a part in the official RAF 100 programme. A lecture on St-Omer and the RFC is being given the previous evening (19 September) by our president at *La Chapelle des Jesuites*. This is a public event and any member who is able to travel to St-Omer is very welcome to attend.

Mick Davis

The RFC mural at Longuenesse.



WE NEED A VOLUNTEER!

Internet technologies are becoming more and more important to everyone, including societies such as ours. More of us are becoming IT orientated and the younger generation, from which our future membership will be drawn, access material via modern technology, rather than hard copy. CCI needs to keep up with this. We have a professional web developer who does all the tough technical work and we like to think he does it pretty well: take a bow, Chris!

Andy Kemp has managed this area of Society activity since the introduction of our first website, nineteen years ago, but has also been our Membership Secretary and needs some of his workload relieved. We need someone to work with Chris on website changes, and to manage regular updates. I stress that the work is not technical – though some knowledge of technical language would make conversations with Chris flow more easily. The role is to help guide web site development, manage routine updates and help liaise between Chris and the committee on new features – such as our long-promised Member's Area and the new Modeller's Section.

Andy isn't going anywhere, so whoever takes on this role will have plenty of support and a source of advice. However, it's time for him to hand on the baton. Anyone willing to take on this role should contact Andy via the address given on the contents page.

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