



LIEUTENANT GENERAL M B FARNDALE, CB
Colonel Commandant, Army Air Corps
Headquarters 1st (British) Corps
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HRH Duke of Edinburgh KG KT
Buckingham Palace
LONDON SW1

26 April 1983

Sir,

I am writing on behalf of The Army Air Corps to request your help to enable us to build a new Museum of Army Flying at Middle Wallop. We intend to raise £500,000 and indeed we have already raised half that sum. This makes it possible for us to lay the foundation stone on 1st September 1983, our Regimental Birthday. The new Museum will be four times the size of our present converted Camp Cinema and will house the 15 historic aircraft which we have temporarily stored in a hangar. If all goes well the new Museum will open to the public on 1st September 1984.

The Museum will show the history of flying within the Army from the 19th Century Balloonists, to the Air Observation Post Squadrons and the Glider Pilot Regiment and of course that of the Army Air Corps from 1957 onwards. You will know that about half the men in Army Aviation are members of your Corps, The REME. Because of this I am in contact with the Colonel Commandant to ensure that REME are properly represented.

Our Appeal Council is modelled on that of the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton with Lord Aldington as President, General Withall (Director Army Air Corps) as Chairman and it has the following patrons: General Sir Hugh Stockwell, General Sir John Mogg, General Sir Frank King (my three predecessors), Colonel John Hines, Victor Gauntlett, David Shepherd, Alan Curtis and Alan Bristow. Commander White has been of the greatest possible help to us.

The Appeal was opened at the Army Air Corps Regimental Dinner in March 1982. The Corps has already raised £50,000 by Deed of Covenant and other activities. Westland Helicopters have donated a Covenant of £60,000 spread over two years.

This, with the other donations and £150,000 underwritten by Alan Bristow and John Hines totals about £250,000. I am delighted with this response in just over a year. However, the second £250,000 will be more difficult to raise. The Appeal Council launched an appeal to raise this from Commerce, Industry and Charitable Trusts. A number of distinguished visitors have been to see the project including Prince Michael of Kent, The Earl of Northampton, the Hon Patrick Lindsay, Tommy Sopwith, the late Colin Chapman and Alan Curtis. Since then The Hon Gerald Ward, Stirling Moss, Sir Arthur Norman, the Southern Tourist Board, Lord Montagu, Mr Alan Borg (Director Imperial War Museum), Lt Gen Sir Napier Crookenden, Mr William Reid (Director National Army Museum) have given considerable advice and help. We have many more visits and events planned at Middle Wallop during the rest of this year and in 1984. Lord Lewin, as a Council member of the Museum and Galleries Commission, has agreed to visit the project.

We were delighted that you were able to be with us for our Air Display in 1982 and we aim to hold another in 1984. However we believe that we should hold a fund raising dinner in London also in 1984, possibly, at the Painted Hall, Armoury House or The Royal Hospital and Sir, we would be delighted if you would attend as our Guest of Honour.

The date is not vital to us, though early Spring would suit us best. May I ask if you would honour us with your presence and if so what date would suit you best?

I have the honour to be, Sir
Your Royal Highness's most humble
and obedient servant,



Silent copy:

HQ AAC