

# News Release

**For Immediate Release**

**20 February 2019 / PR 10901**

## **Alcock and Brown return to Crayford**

The Erith Group have donated an amazing £25,000 to help support celebrations marking the centenary of Alcock and Brown. Their generous donation will help fund special events and a magnificent bench to commemorate the 'Alcock and Brown – Knights of the Air' centenary this year.

The Alcock and Brown Centenary Project Group (Crayford), which is made up of members of the Crayford community, local historical and community groups, approached the company last year and they were very happy to support the special cause.

An impressive bench designed by artist Tony Stallard will be sited in Crayford close to the Clocktower and unveiled on 23 July during a special community event. It will depict John Alcock and Arthur Whitten Brown life-size and in their full flying gear.

The 'Alcock and Brown – Knights of the Air' projects will run throughout 2019. It will commemorate the first non-stop trans-Atlantic flight by John Alcock and Arthur Whitten-Brown in a modified Vickers Vimy bomber, originally designed and built in the Vickers factory in Crayford.

Their historic flight left Newfoundland, Canada on 14 June and flew 16.5 hours to Clifden on the west coast of Ireland.

Commemorative plaques designed by local schoolchildren and community groups, two exhibitions and a special free family celebration day at Hall Place & Gardens on Sunday 21 July that will include a model plane flying Guinness Book of Records attempt, are all part of the ambitious project.

Bexley's Cabinet Member for Places, Cllr Peter Craske said: "This is a fantastic act of generosity from the Erith Group. This bench illustrates our pride in the borough's great history. Its presence will act as a reminder of our industrial past and to have such a successful local company behind it makes perfect sense."

The Alcock and Brown Centenary Project Group (Crayford) is supported by the London Borough of Bexley,

For more information about the centenary events visit [www.alcockandbrownevents.co.uk](http://www.alcockandbrownevents.co.uk)

For more information on the 21 July Hall Place & Gardens community fun day email [abfunday@gmail.com](mailto:abfunday@gmail.com)

For more information on the Alcock and Brown Centenary Project Group (Crayford) and how to get involved email [janet.hearn-gillham@ntlworld.com](mailto:janet.hearn-gillham@ntlworld.com)

### **Notes to editors -**

The project received a grant of £39,100 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) earlier this year.

### **About the Heritage Lottery Fund -**

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLottery and #HLFsupported.

### **The Alcock and Brown Centenary Project Group (Crayford) –**

The Alcock and Brown Centenary Project Group (Crayford) was formed in early 2017 with the aim of developing a major celebration in 2019 of the extraordinary achievement made by Alcock and Brown. Members of the Group are drawn from a variety of local organisations, e.g. history societies, including the Crayford Manor House Historical Society and Crayford Town Archive, Rotary, British Legion, Bexley Civic Society and London Borough of Bexley Members and Officers. To find out more, please contact [janet.hearn-gillham@ntlworld.com](mailto:janet.hearn-gillham@ntlworld.com) or [Geraldene.Lucia-Hennis@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:Geraldene.Lucia-Hennis@bexley.gov.uk)

### **Vimy aircraft –**

Parts of the Vimy bomber flown by Alcock and Brown were manufactured and the planes assembled on the Crayford site, then dismantled and taken to Joyce Green airfield for test flights before moving to Weybridge, where there was an airstrip next to the factory. There the Vimy was modified and assembled using the parts made at Crayford. For more information visit [www.crayfordhistory.org.uk](http://www.crayfordhistory.org.uk)

For more information on Tony Stallard visit [www.tonystallard.co.uk](http://www.tonystallard.co.uk)

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Attachments

- Alcock and Brown return to Crayford [Alcock and Brown return to Crayford](#)
- The Alcock and Brown bench in the studio [The Alcock and Brown bench in the studio](#)
- The Alcock and Brown bench starts to take shape [The Alcock and Brown bench starts to take shape](#)