



HQ AIR COMMAND
Air Command Secretariat
Spitfire Block
Royal Air Force
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP14 4UE

Our Ref: TOCN10#2020/06817

1 July 2020

Mr Geoff Furkert
<geoff.furkert@xtra.co.nz>

Dear Mr Furkert,

Thank you for your email of 9 June addressed to the Prime Minister requesting support for the memorial campaign for Sir Keith Park. As I hope you will understand the Prime Minister receives a great deal of correspondence and it is not always possible for him to respond personally. Consequently, I have been asked to respond on his behalf.

I fully understand why you would wish to establish a memorial for Sir Keith in his home town, which would be a fitting tribute to the heroism and courageous actions of a man without whom the history of the Battle of Britain could have been disastrously different. As you will be aware, in the summer of 1940 the then Air Vice-Marshal Keith Park, as the commander of the RAF Fighter Group responsible for the defence of London and the south-east of England, bore the major burden in ensuring the defeat of Hitler's Luftwaffe during the Battle of Britain. Resolute and skilful in equal measure, he played a major part in a victory which inflicted the first serious reverse on Nazi Germany and kept Britain and ultimately the world free from tyranny. His remarkable achievements are an inspiration to our airmen and airwomen of today.

Clearly Sir Keith's achievements are worthy of recognition and I note that you have referred to the statue of Sir Keith outside the Battle of Britain 11 Group Bunker at Uxbridge. You may also wish to be aware that the restored Battle of Britain Operations room at Northolt was named after Sir Keith in a ceremony led by the Royal New Zealand Chief of the Air Staff, a testament as well to the continued close relationship between both countries' Air Forces

In respect of your request for donations towards the memorial, I can advise that gifts to charities or voluntary groups are not normally made and will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances. As I am sure you will appreciate, the MOD receives many requests from charitable and other organisations for donations and we must ensure that a fair and balanced approach is taken with all of these requests. It would be unfair to support one individual or organisation while refusing requests from others. Consequently, we are unable to assist you with your request.

I do hope this explains the situation and I am sorry that I can not provide you with a more positive response. I would like to wish you all the best for the campaign and for the Battle of Britain commemorations taking place in September at Thames Airfield.

Yours sincerely,

Frances Shailer

Frances Shailer (Mrs)
Air Command Secretariat

THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION

Malta G.C. Branch

(Incorporated by Royal Charter)

Patron
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

Local Patron
H.E. THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER



*(Registered under the War Charities Act. 1940
and the Charities Act. 1960)*

All Communications to be addressed to:
The Secretary,
17, St. Augustine Street,
Zejtun, ZT13204,
MALTA

Malta Voluntary Organisation Registration No. VO1620

20 May 2020

Geoff Furkert
Chairman,
Battle of Britain 2020 Commemorations Committee,
Thames NZ".

As the RAFA Malta GC Branch we strongly support your initiative for having a Memorial in honour of AVM Sir Keith Park, who apart from being a Battle of Britain ACE Fighter Pilot, he was the Commander for the RAF in Malta during the Malta Siege during Summer 1942. He introduced new tactics in the RAF battle over the skies in Malta

History records that he was providential during the hardest time of Malta was facing during his time as Air Commander Malta, when Malta received more than twice the amount of bombs that the UK got during the whole WWII.

We assure you that his name is recorded in 'gold' in the Malta Siege history and up this day he is the most renowned RAF Officer Commanding in Maltese history. His name keeps coming up frequently in publications and articles related to Malta's contribution during WWII.

Permits to attach a copy of the Chapter dedicated to Sir Keith Park in my book about the history of Malta's Early warning System during World War II, which I published in 2014, which revealed the contribution that RAF Radars in Malta gave which in my opinion were a main contribution for the Allies to win the war.

Unfortunately, our RAFA Branch cannot be of any monetary assistance as we are dependent on our members, who due to age has dwindles rapidly and thus hardly can manage our Welfare services we give to all RAF Families who live or happen to visit Malta. One should point out that the RAF presence in Malta was terminated in 1979.

Yours truly,

Major Tony Abela (Rtd)
Secretary

Cc. Mr Kevin Bonnici
New Zealand Hon Consul

email: ninton22@gmail.com, Tel. +356 21677061, Mob. +356 79047718

Geoff Furkert

From: Embajada de Nueva Zelanda <madrid@embajadanuevazelanda.com>
Sent: Friday, 22 May 2020 11:28 p.m.
To: geoff.furkert@xtra.co.nz
Subject: Contact enquiry for Malta
Attachments: RAFA malat GC Letterhead.docx

Dear Mr Furkert,

Thank you for your email requesting assistance with obtaining a Letter of Support to have a memorial erected in honour of Sir Keith Park.

Our Honorary Consul in Malta, Mr Kevin Bonnici, contacted the Royal Air Force Associations (RAFA) and has obtained the attached letter from Major Tony Abela, which we hope will be of satisfaction. Likewise, he has been in touch with the Malta branch of the Commonwealth Graves Commission who have advised that Mr Ray Polidano, Director of the Malta Aviation Museum, would also be very interested in the memorial project. His email is info@maltaaviationmuseum.com should you wish to contact him.

Our Honorary Consul would be most interested in being kept informed of any developments with the project, or willing to assist should you require any further assistance. Mr Bonnici's email is nzconsulate.mt@gmail.com.

We hope to have been of assistance.

Kind regards,

New Zealand Embassy Madrid | Te Aka Aorere
T +34 91 523 02 26 F +34 91 523 01 71

Calle del Pinar, 7, 3º
Madrid 28006
Spain

www.mfat.govt.nz | www.safetravel.govt.nz | www.facebook.com/nzembassyspain



From: Geoff Furkert [<mailto:geoff.furkert@xtra.co.nz>]
Sent: Saturday, 16 May 2020 11:25 AM
To: ENQUIRIES
Subject: Contact enquiry for Malta

Good morning

Can you help please . . ?

I am leading a project in Thames to erect a memorial

MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND
TE PAPA TONGAREWA

Cable St
PO Box 467
Wellington
New Zealand

Telephone
64-4-381 7000
Facsimile
64-4-381 7070



16 June 2020

Geoff Furkert
President
Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield Inc
Thames

Tēnā koe Mr Furkert

RE: SIR KEITH PARK MEMORIAL

Thank you for your letter and attachments of 17 May 2020.

We support your project and the importance of acknowledging and remembering the achievements of New Zealanders like Sir Keith Park.

Ngā mihi nui

Nāku, nā

Dean Peterson
DIRECTOR COLLECTIONS & RESEARCH



Hon Scott Simpson
Member of Parliament for Coromandel



26 May 2020

To Whom It May Concern

Thames Airfield Sir Keith Park Memorial

This letter confirms my enthusiastic support of Thames Airfield, a well-recognised local community asset in my Coromandel constituency. Thames is a historic New Zealand town situated between the Firth of Thames and the ranges of the Coromandel in New Zealand.

The Thames Airfield is named in honour of a Thames born and bred hero **Air Chief Marshal Sir Keith Park**, Commander of 11 Group Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain.

Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield Incorporation (SKMPA) diligently works to raise the recognition of Sir Keith Park. They plan to further advance this objective by organising an appropriate recognition of the 80th anniversary the Battle of Britain in September of this year.

SKMPA propose that a memorial be erected at the Thames Airfield of Sir Keith in his flying uniform with a replica Hurricane presented in his personal battle colours of 1940 of which will complement the already in-situ bronze structure of Sir Keith at Thames Civic Centre.

Greater recognition of Sir Keith has the potential to enhance Thames and the region. This could form the basis for further developments that the updated Airfield Designation enables.

Therefore I wholeheartedly support the SKPMA Inc. and their proposal and I commend this project for your favourable funding consideration.

Thank you in anticipation.

Kind regards

Hon Scott Simpson
MP for Coromandel

Wellington

A | Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand
P | +64 4 817 8390
E | scott.simpson@parliament.govt.nz

Authorised by Scott Simpson, 614 Pollen St, Thames

Coromandel

A | 614 Pollen Street, PO Box 215, Thames 3500
P | +64 7 868 3529
P | Freephone Katikati 07 549 4312 & Kaiaua 09 232 2588
E | mpcoromandel@parliament.govt.nz



Thames and Districts Returned And Services Association 2014

Mr Geoff Furkert

25th May 2020

1 30 Te Arapipi Road
Totara
THAMES

Dear Geoff and Committee,

The President, committee and members of the Thames and Districts RSA would like to congratulate you all on your initiative regarding the Sir Keith Park Memorial.

We give our whole hearted support to the memorial and the concept behind it.

We can see a huge potential for the district once completed, especially from the tourism aspect.

Thames should be proud of one of its "old locals/heroes" and a decent memorial to him would be a great asset to the community.

We wish you the very best in your endeavours.

Kindest regards,

Allan Gamble

Secretary.



Destination Coromandel
Civic Centre
200 Mary St
Thames

To Whom It May Concern:

Destination Coromandel would like to express their support for the development of the Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield. If successful, the project promises to unlock tourism and aviation potential that would bring further economic benefits to Thames and the wider region (including Hauraki).

However, the focus is to recognise the contribution of Sir Keith Park - born in Thames. The Battle of Britain event in September is one such example of achieving all objectives previously identified (tourism and aviation economic activity and recognition of a local hero). September is traditionally one of the 5 quieter months in *The Coromandel* visitor economy bringing in less than \$20m to the whole region. An annual aviation event will address one of our greater challenges, being seasonality.

The proposed development, including the memorial, will make a statement upon entry into Thames – helping to contribute to the towns appeal, with an avenue to share a compelling story. It also happens to be located alongside the Hauraki Rail Trail that features a growing number of sculptures along this section. The airfield development will contribute towards the making of a destination. Thames is often seen as a gateway and overlooked as visitors pass through to other areas in the region. Providing a compelling reason to stop will provide an opportunity to showcase other attractions such as the heritage, Kauaeranga Valley and nearby Thames Coast. This increases the significance of quality product development, beyond the focus of recognising Sir Keith Park, as it helps improve the wider community.

In addition to his war time heroics Sir Keith Park continued to give for humanitarian and environmental causes. These qualities may supersede all others, e.g. economic benefits. The memorial will serve as a reminder of his bravery and his desire to improve the world around him – this is the story his memorial will help symbolise and a story that needs to be shared. Being more than a memory it will be his legacy and help to improve our surrounding community.

Kind regards
Hadley Dryden

General Manager
Destination Coromandel
hadley@thecoromandel.com | 07 868 0472



29th May 2020

Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield Inc
Thames 3500

Attention: Mr Geoff Furkert, Chair

Dear Sirs:

Re: Support of the proposed memorial

On behalf of the Thames Business Association board and all its members, it is our pleasure to write this letter in support of the development of the Sir Keith Park Memorial.

Sir Keith Park was Thames born and bred. Rising to the rank of Air Chief Marshal, he became a wartime hero, commanding 11 group fighters during the Battle of Britain.

The placement of the proposed memorial at the Thames Airfield will be a significant drawing card for citizens and visitors alike. With your plans to recognise the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain in September, this will further enhance the profile of Sir Keith Park.

We believe this initiative will encourage more interest in Thames and its history and will be a permanent and meaningful reminder of the outstanding contribution of one of its own. We are proud to offer this letter of support and look forward to helping you and your committee to promote the importance and value of this memorial.

Kind regards,

Heather Moore
Chair

Sue Lewis-O'Halloran
Chief Executive Officer

Thames Business Association
562 Pollen Street
Thames 3500

Ph 022 466 1031



THE LIONS CLUB OF THAMES (Inc)

P.O. Box 195, Thames

President: Christine Kemp 07-8267892

Secretary: Pam Kenny

21st May 2020

To Whom It May Concern

This letter is in support of the planned Sir Keith Park Memorial at the Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield (SKPMA) in Thames and endorses the work of the Commemoration Committee to erect this memorial. This year 2020 is the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain and the Lions Club in Thames believes that Sir Keith Parke should be honoured more than he is for what he did for the world.

What did Sir Keith do?

Due to his management of the British Air Force Fighter Command Sir Keith held Hitler on the French side of the Channel until the Germans gave up. In other words Sir Keith, with his leadership and drive enabled the Allied pilots to win the Britain for Britain and her Commonwealth by fighting the German bombers continuously over England. This changed the war dramatically as Hitler gave up the idea of invasion of England and subsequently WW2 was fought in Europe and North Africa.

A Thames Lion was the instigator of the idea of how to honour Sir Keith in a meaningful manner as he (as a little boy of three years old) slept under the falling German bombs during the Battle. He has had little trouble gaining excitement and support of others about his original plan which has been tweaked and enhanced until it has reached its present format and we now hope that the excitement will continue to grow.

We look forward to the agreement and support of the Council and Thames Community Board to have the replica Hurricane mounted at the Airfield adjacent to the Hauraki Aero Club (rather than the roadside).

Signed by President of the Lions Club of Thames: Christine Kemp.



ROTARY CLUB OF THAMES Inc.

District 9930 New Zealand
P O Box 38 Thames

28th May 2020

Chairman Geoff Furkett
Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield Inc.

Dear Sir,

The Rotary Club of Thames Charitable Trust offers both financial and work in kind support for the Sir Keith Park Airfield Memorial.

Our members enthusiastically support this project and acknowledge its value to our community in raising awareness of his great contribution to our success in WW2 and his subsequent contribution to the development of Auckland International Airport while serving on Auckland City Council.

It will become a tourist icon in our district.

We look forward to working with your Memorial Committee to the successful completion of this fitting tribute to Sir Keith Park.

Your sincerely,

Warren Sly
President
Rotary Club of Thames Inc.

NEW ZEALAND Warbirds Association (INC.)



de Havilland Lane, ARDMORE, Ardmore Airfield,
Private Bag 14, Papakura, 2110
NEW ZEALAND

email: manager@nzwarbirds.org.nz

To: Battle of Britain 2020 Commemorations Committee
c/- Mr. Geoff Furkert
by Email

From: Frank Parker
President
NZ Warbirds Association

Date: 16 May 2020

Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield

This letter is in support of planned Sir Keith Park Memorial at the Sir Keith Park Memorial Airfield (SKPMA) at Thames.

NZ Warbirds Association is an Incorporated Society dedicated to the preservation and operation of ex-military and classic aircraft. The Association is New Zealand wide and has its main base of operations at Ardmore Airport South Auckland. We have 550 members from around New Zealand and represent over 30 classic and ex-military aircraft. We also have affiliations to other kindred clubs, for example the Tiger Moth Club, The Catalina Preservation Society, The DeHavilland Beaver Preservation Society etc. The Association also holds Civil Aviation certificates to organise and authorise Aviation Events and complete specialist flight training in our sphere of operations.

Our simple mantra is 'Keep 'em Flying' in that our Association focuses on the operation of classic and ex-military aircraft as a means of preserving this import part of history for future generations.

Part of that history is the 'people'. Sir Keith Park ticks just about every 'people' box, WW 1, Gallipoli, Western Front, Aviation, Ace pilot, WW 2 Battle of Britain, Egypt, Malta and South East Asia, and post WW 2 civil service in various spheres of the Auckland City Council.

And yet in the modern generation this great man's name is virtually unknown. It is therefore appropriate that Sir Keith is given recognition in the town of his birth and the proposal for the airfield memorial appropriate to his military aviation service.

Accordingly NZ Warbirds Association endorses endeavours by the Battle of Britain 2020 Commemorations Committee to erect this Memorial.

Frank Parker
President
NZ Warbirds Association

SKYWORK

HELICOPTERS LTD



New Zealand Head Office
Northland Auckland Base
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255 Baddeleys Beach Road,
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25th May 2020

Geoff Furkert
Thames Airfield

Other bases
Northland
Onerahi Airport
Whangarei 0110
P: +64 9436 5155

Thames
Thames Airfield
Thames 3576
P: +64 7 868 6100

Dear Geoff,

Thank you for making contact regarding the proposed memorial to Sir Keith Park at Thames airfield.

Skywork Helicopters view this as a great opportunity to create a point of interest for the Airfield that will hopefully draw the attention of the public.

We have no objection to the construction of the proposed Hurricane replica and statue, and we look forward to the project going ahead.

Kind Regards,

Miriam Stevenson
CEO/Director

New Zealand Aviation Safety Award
Winners 2000 & 2011



Skywork - Specialists in:

Lifting - Survey - Photography - Filming - Agriculture - Forestry - Power Line Maintenance - Firefighting - Charters

www.skyworkhelicopters.com
or skywork@skyworkhelicopters.com



HAURAKI AERO CLUB (Inc.)

Telephone 868 6445

THAMES

P.O. Box 64

24/05/2020

To Whom It May Concern

The Hauraki Aero Club has no objection to and fully supports the concept of the Sir Keith Park Memorial, and it's siting north/adjacent to the Hauraki Aero Club clubhouse.

Yours Faithfully

Paul Watson
Secretary
Hauraki Aero Club

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