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Air Training Corps

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PRESS RELEASE

Top Awards for Air Cadet Staff

Three Air Cadet Staff from Bedfordshire & Cambridgeshire Wing Air Training Corps were honoured on Monday by Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon GCB CBE ADC FRAeS, former Chief of the Air Staff and Member of the Air Force Board, at a ceremony held at College Hall Officer's Mess at RAF Cranwell.

Sqn Ldr Alan Druce RAF VR(T) Ret'd, the Wing Duke of Edinburgh Awards Officer from **Dunstable**, Mr John Penn, Civilian Committee Chairman from 511 (**Ramsey**) Squadron and Flt. Lt. John Springett Ret'd, Squadron President from 1220 (**March**) Squadron have served over 125 years between them in the Air Cadet Organisation. All three were awarded Certificates for long and meritorious service, presented by ACM Sir Michael Graydon.

In his speech following the Award Presentations to 49 Air Cadet Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon said *"It is a privilege to attend this presentation and give out the awards. For all the service over time and what you have achieved is beyond price, the job you are doing in the Air Cadet Organisation is absolutely vital for the future of the Country and you should be proud.*

The Air Cadet Organisation is a national treasure, it is the top national Youth Organisation in the United Kingdom and I wouldn't be here today but for the Air Cadets, when I joined as a Cadet in Gloucestershire, it is an organisation that sets them on the right course for the future, and on behalf of the Royal Air Force and the Country I thank you".

Sqn Ldr Druce joined the Air Cadet Organisation as a Cadet in 1961 with 78 (Wembley) Squadron, on leaving he became a Civilian Instructor in 1968, and in 1969 was promoted to Warrant Officer. From 1969 – 1978 he served with 460 (Dunstable) Squadron and in 1981 was commissioned as an Officer. He took over 1003 (Leighton Buzzard) Squadron as Flight Lieutenant Officer Commanding in 1985, and became a Wing Staff Officer in 1992 in charge of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Wing Musketry Officer and Wing Aero-Modelling and Air Recognition Officer. In 1997 he took over the Wing Physical Education Officer post before being promoted to Squadron Leader Wing Staff Officer East. He retired in January 2001 remaining the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Officer in the Wing, thus serving 44 years, so far.

Flt. Lt. John Springett joined as a Cadet at 323 Squadron in Surrey Wing and later became a Civilian Instructor in 1968 with 135 (Redhill and Reigate) Squadron. He joined 1220 (March) Squadron in 1975 and following this was commissioned to Flight Lieutenant with 2331 (St Ives) Squadron. He is now the Squadron President of 1220 (March) Squadron serving 41 years this year.



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Mr John Penn joined the Air Cadet Organisation as a Cadet at 9F(Holloway) Squadron before joining the Royal Air Force. On leaving the Air Force he joined 16F Squadron as a Warrant Officer, before joining 511 (Ramsey) Squadron as their Civilian Committee Chairman. He has served for 40 years.

Following the Ceremony there was a buffet and a chance for all the award winners and their guests to meet and greet the various VIP Guests, including the Air Chief Marshal, Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Gordon Moulds MBE RAF and Central & East Region Commandant, Group Captain Jon Ford RAFR, before joining a historical grand tour of College Hall Officer's Mess.

△ *Margaret Bell*
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for OC Wing

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Award VIPs from left to right – Air Commadore Gordon Moulds Commandant Air Cadets, Flt. Lt. John Springett Ret'd, Sqn Ldr Alan Druce Ret'd, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon, Mr John Penn and Group Captain Jon Ford.

Award AD – Air Chief Marshall presenting to Sqn Ldr Druce Ret'd (Dunstable)

Award JP – Air Chief Marshal presenting to Mr John Penn (Ramsey)

Award JS – Air Chief Marshal presenting to Flt Lt. Springett Ret'd (March)

Photos by the WMCO



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