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*Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Wing
Air Training Corps*

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PRESS RELEASE

CELEBRATING 69 YEARS OF YOUTH

The Air Training Corps (ATC), otherwise known as the Air Cadets, celebrated its 69th anniversary on 5th February.

Created in 1941 from the Air Defence Cadet Corps (ADCC), the purpose and role of the ATC is summarised by its aims, set out upon its formation nearly 70 years ago and still very much the foundation of the uniformed youth organisation today.

The first- to promote and encourage among young men and women a practical interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force- is very evident on today's Squadrons as young Cadets learn about various aviation subjects from the history and principles of flight to advanced navigation. They can also undertake flying courses, years before they could in civilian life and at comparatively little cost.

A rank structure similar to that of the RAF, along with leadership training and team exercises fulfils the second aim in exactly the same ways as it would have in the 40s - to provide training which will be useful both in the Services and in civil life.

The final aim is to foster the spirit of adventure and to develop the qualities of leadership and good citizenship. This is fulfilled by the ATC in a myriad of ways from marksmanship training and adventurous training in the field to assisting at local public events.

In many ways, the ATC is still the same organisation it was 69 years ago, albeit bigger and more modernised.

This Sunday (7th Feb), approximately 100 members of the Corps including cadets and staff attended a parade in Cranfield Village to commemorate the achievements of the ATC. The parade (made up of Squadrons from Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Wing's Southern Sector) was assembled and marched from 207 (Cranfield) Squadron's headquarters in Merchants Lane to St Peter and St Pauls Church, where the Rev. Hugh Symes-Thompson conducted a poignant service. The parade then reassembled and marched back to 207 Sqn's HQ, Sector Commander Squadron Leader Chas Dicks RAFVR(T) taking a salute en route.

Commanding Officer of 207 (Cranfield) Squadron, Flight Lieutenant Paul Weston RAFVR(T) commented: 'It was great to see such a large turn out from just a few Squadrons to celebrate the anniversary of the ATC. The day went off without a hitch and everyone seemed to have a good time.'

207 Squadron are now recruiting new cadets from the age of 13 to 18. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact the Squadron on 01234 752030 or call in at their Headquarters off Merchants Lane, Cranfield between the times of 7:30pm and 9:30pm on a Monday or Thursday evening.

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SMCO
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Notes to Editor

- Attached photo: 'ATC Sunday.jpg'
- 'Flight Lieutenant Weston leads the parade as Squadron Leader Dicks receives the salute.'
- Picture is subject to Crown Copyright.



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