

# ROBIN GIBB

Press Release

For Immediate Release

## Robin Gibb welcomes Prince Williams's support for the Bomber Command memorial campaign

*'I welcome Prince William's support for the Bomber Command Memorial campaign.*

*Prince William has always had a deep admiration for all divisions of the military and in that respect he echoes the same values of his father Prince Charles and his grandmother the Queen.*

*I can only imagine the joy it will bring to the survivors of Bomber Command to have Prince William's support for their monument, so long overdue.'*

***Robin Gibb CBE***

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## Statement by H.R.H. Prince William

Daily Express 30.10.10

*'Of the 125,000 men of Bomber Command, 56,000 gave their lives for this country and for freedom.*

*These numbers are so appalling that we risk becoming inured to what they truly mean. Behind each death was a family – parents, friends, often a wife and children, and each would have been utterly devastated by the loss of a loved one — as those who survive no doubt remain so today.*

*For someone of my generation, the scale of this loss is almost impossible to comprehend. Yet comprehend it we must. Each one of those young men died for you and for me. So much of the analysis of Bomber Command's role in the Second World War has been mired in controversy that it is sometimes forgotten what these young men went through for us.*

*Their average age was only 22. They were all volunteers. They set forth into the unknown by day and by night, often in freezing conditions. Over enemy territory, they were under near constant attack. And they did this night after night – for up to 12 hours at a time. Just try to imagine that – imagine finding the courage to overcome your fear to climb into your flying gear again, and again, knowing what will confront you.*

*As a flyer myself, I find this quite extraordinary. But they did it – tens of thousands of times. A memorial to the crews of Bomber Command has been half a century too long in coming. Having seen the plans for this sublimely beautiful memorial, I do feel that at last their wait is at end.*

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*This will be a truly fitting epitaph to the other – sometimes forgotten – Second World War heroes of the Royal Air Force. A yew tree, a gift from the German nation, is to be planted in the Garden of Remembrance nearby.*

*There can be no greater message of reconciliation than this. Today, only some 3,000 men of Bomber Command remain with us. It is vital, therefore, that this memorial be erected now, while they are still alive and able to appreciate our Nation's gratitude to them, and to their fallen comrades. My great-grandmother, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, was a great champion of Bomber Command.*

*Instinctively, she knew that it was right to honour these young men and their extraordinary sacrifice. As with so much else in her life, her instincts were correct. You might ask, with a champion such as Queen Elizabeth, what need is there for me to ask you to support this appeal. All I can say is that, as the Patron of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight – with its magnificent guardian of these memories, the lone Lancaster, 'The City of Lincoln' – my own realisation of what these men undertook has only recently really dawned on me – as I think it has with many of my generation in other ways.*

*Mine is but one among many voices, urging all those who value the freedoms we enjoy today to contribute whatever you feel you can towards the creation of this wonderful monument. And for those who have already supported the appeal it is not for me to say thank you, but I can only imagine the gratitude of the veterans of Bomber Command, their families and the Royal Air Force.'*

**H.R.H. Prince William**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'William', with a horizontal line underneath.

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## Bomber Command Memorial

- Thanks to tireless campaigning by the RAF Bomber Command Association spearheaded by Robin Gibb of the Bee Gees with the support of the UK media including: Daily Telegraph, Daily Express, News International, Daily Mail and ITN along with the marvelous support from members of the British public £4m has already been raised towards the £6.7m cost of the memorial. A further £2.7m is required either by donation or guarantee so that building work can commence immediately.
- The Bomber Command Memorial to be built in London's Green Park is to honour the 55,573 young men from Bomber Command who lost their lives in WWII.
- Bomber Command was the only British fighting force which took the war directly to Germany, destroying vital infrastructure and supply lines. They helped to keep London and British cities safe from attack whilst shortening the war.
- There were 125,000 in Bomber Command, all of whom were volunteers. The average age of the young aircrew lost was 22 and some were as young as 18 of which 8,403 were wounded; 9,838 were made prisoners of war.
- Many nationalities from around the world served in Bomber Command including the Commonwealth, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South African, Caribbean, Poland, Czechoslovakia, France and other countries of occupied Europe.
- Their losses accounted to 10% of all fatalities and were greater than that of any other service during WWII. Approximately 3,000 Bomber Command veterans are still alive, but they are passing away at a rate of between 12 to 70 a month.
- Half of the Bomber Command casualties have no known grave.

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- The memorial designed by acclaimed Architect Liam O'Connor best known for creating the Armed Forces Memorial in the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, and for the design and construction of the Commonwealth Memorial Gates on Constitution near Buckingham Palace.
- The Portland stone Doric column colonnade will be 80 metres along Piccadilly on the edge of Green Park adjacent to the Wellington Memorial with a central atrium open to the sky. The memorial will be the largest memorial built in London for 200 years.
- In the central atrium will be a nine foot high bronze statue of seven aircrew a pilot, flight engineer, navigator, bomb aimer, wireless operator, mid-upper and rear gunner by renowned sculpture Philip Jackson, (whose work includes the HM Queen Elizabeth Memorial on The Mall in London and The Bobby Moore Memorial at the new Wembley Stadium)
- Time is of the essence for the surviving servicemen, who are now in their late 80s and 90s.
- We are in a race to ensure that the balance of the money is raised so that the building work can commence Spring 2011.
- H.R.H. Queen Elizabeth is due to unveil and dedicate the memorial.
- If the building does not commence in 2011 it could be delayed so as to comply with the building regulations for the Queens Jubilee and the Olympic Games in 2012.
- Major donors will have their names inscribed on the memorial. A limited edition of nine bronze maquettes of the statue of the aircrew are planned to be presented to the major donors to the memorial.

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## Quotes

*'I've put my heart and soul into being a champion of this cause. I had a vision of this monument becoming a reality and now I want to see it unveiled. These guys are heroes – they saved the world and they deserve the best. The whole world, including Germany, is free today because of Bomber Command's sacrifice.'*

**Robin Gibb, CBE**

*'We have been striving for many years to have a memorial in central London to recognise the contribution of Bomber Command to victory in World War Two, and in particular, the huge sacrifice of the lives of so many of our comrades in achieving it. The memorial has been designed and we now need to go ahead with all speed.'*

**Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Michael Beetham, President of the Bomber Command Association, GCB CBE DFC AFC FRAeS**

*'It is time the nation finally showed its gratitude by building a permanent memorial. I fully support this important campaign to do more to remember those brave men from Bomber Command who died doing their duty. Their deeds have not been recognised in the way the heroes from the Battle of Britain have been, but their sacrifices were just as great.'*

**The Prime Minister, David Cameron,**

*'55,573 members of the Command died during the Second World War. The sacrifice of these young men and women in the Allied cause is truly humbling: we owe them an enormous debt of gratitude.'*

**The Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg**

*'The fighters are our salvation..... but the bombers alone provide the means of victory.'* **Winston Churchill September 1940.**

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*Links*

[www.rafbombercommand.com](http://www.rafbombercommand.com)

Press release Issued by

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