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# Monument to commemorate RAF Locking apprentices unveiled at former training site

**A monument has been unveiled to commemorate recruits at Locking's former RAF base.**

The site at Locking Parklands served as a base from 1939 to 2000 and the monument pays tribute to the thousands of apprentices who trained at the site.

More than 5,750 people were trained in ground and air electronics trades from 1952-1976 at the No 1 Radio School.

In 1993, ex-apprentices formed their own group, the RAF Locking Apprentice Association (Rafaa), which was joined by more than 700 members.

The structure was designed by former apprentices Richard Atkinson, Tony Horry and Peter Crowe, and features the apprentice wheel – a brass propeller worn by young RAF recruits.

It also includes a plan and aerial

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photograph of the original station.

Chairman of Rafaa, Hans Kuhle, said: "The residents of Locking Parklands now have a memento of what their neighbourhood once was, and old apprentices will be able to sit and reflect on past days at Locking – an important part of their lives."

Air commodore Martin Palmer, Rafaa president, added: "Many had gone on to do a wide variety of things, from being a member of the church to having the Air Force Cross for flying operations and to many aspects of civilian life, as well as reaching all sorts of levels in the RAF."

The monument was funded by both the apprentice association and St Modwen Homes, the developer

behind the Locking Parklands development which has been built on the site following its demolition in 2003.

David Moore, St Modwen senior development management for Locking Parklands, said: "This joint-funded RAF monument is a great way to recognise and commemorate the RAF apprentices who trained at the former base.

"The monument itself is situated across the road from the new community facility, otherwise known as the Radio Wing, also paying homage to the site's history.

"We are confident this will receive a positive response from the fast-growing community at Locking."

There are currently 360 active members of Rafaa.

**For more information on the apprentice association, visit [www.rafaa.org.uk](http://www.rafaa.org.uk)**



The monument pays tribute to the many apprentices who served at RAF Locking.