



The History of the Battle of Britain Fighter Association : Commemorating the Few

Geoff Simpson

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In 1945 it was announced that Allied airmen who had taken part in the Battle of Britain in 1940 would be entitled to the “immediate” award of the 1939-1945 Star, with Battle of Britain Clasp. This was the only Clasp awarded with the 1939-1945 Star.??In the following years holders of the Clasp held informal get-togethers. In 1958 the Battle of Britain Fighter Association (BBFA) was formed, with full membership only available to holders of the Battle of Britain Clasp. Lord Dowding was the first President. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother became Patron. That post is now held by HRH The Prince of Wales.??As well as organising reunions and providing some welfare assistance to members and widows, the Association has played a key role in researching entitlement to the Clasp and pronouncing on claims for the Clasp. A considerable part of the knowledge existing today on these matters came from the work of successive BBFA archivists, the late Group Captain Tom Gleave and the late Wing Commander John Young.??The Association has also become closely associated with the Battle of Britain thanksgiving service held every September in Westminster Abbey.??The Association's archives are held in part by the Secretary of the BBFA, Group Captain Patrick Tootal and in part by the Air Historical Branch, RAF (AHB) at RAF Northolt.??Geoff Simpson has now been invited by the Association to use these archives as the basis of a book on the history of the organisation.

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