

## Historic memorial given fitting home



*Rededication – Gavin Smith leads the service at Larkhill*

A Memorial to one of the earliest pioneers of military aviation has been rescued from the middle of a field and relocated to a new site opposite the Royal School of Artillery at Larkhill.

Major Alexander Hewetson, a 44 year-old member of the Royal Field Artillery, had just completed ten hours of flying instruction and some solo flights when, on July 17, 1913, he was tragically killed.

He was carrying out his pilot's brevet test for the award of his flying certificate from the Royal Aero Club when he attempted a tight turn and crashed.

A memorial stone slab surrounded by posts and railings marked the crash site on the former Lark Hill flying ground which had been returned to agricultural use after the war.

A small service of rededication was held last Thursday at the site led by the Garrison Padre, Gavin Smith.

At the rededication service Roger Green from Wings Over Stonehenge gave an outline of Major Hewetson's career and the importance of this, the first fatality while undergoing a flying test and the unique aviation heritage that exists at Larkhill.

Larkhill Garrison Commander Colonel Dickie Winchester remembered 'finding' the memorial as an eight-year-old schoolboy when it was overgrown by weeds and brambles and clearing some of the growth.

In a joint effort and the support of Larkhill Garrison, WOSH, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and Aspire Ltd the stone has now been re-sited, cleaned and is prominently displayed on the western edge of the old flying ground.

It is now clearly accessible and available to all those interested in local military heritage and it is hoped that, at a later date, an information panel will be installed giving a description of the monument's purpose and its former historic surroundings.

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