

**Embargoed until 0600hrs Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2008  
PRESS RELEASE**

**MODEL FOR SIR KEITH PARK STATUE  
UNVEILED AT CITY HALL**

- **Sculptor Les Johnson selected from field of seven**
- **Plan for statue installation on Trafalgar Square's 4<sup>th</sup> Plinth for 6 months in 2009**
- **Permanent statue planned for Waterloo Place in September 2010 – 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Battle of Britain**
- **Plans backed by Mayor of London Boris Johnson**
- **SKP Campaign to submit detailed planning applications to Westminster City Council before Christmas**

The winning design for the proposed statue of New Zealand-born Sir Keith Park, the Battle of Britain hero, was unveiled today at London's City Hall.

The unveiling followed an international competition won by Les Johnson, the leading sculptor, who is currently working on the international slavery memorial statue for Hyde Park. Les Johnson's design was selected from a field of seven by a specially convened group of Campaign supporters. Members included Faith Winter, the sculptor of statues of the RAF's Lord (Hugh) Dowding and Sir Arthur Harris, Terence Stevens-Prior a relative of Sir Keith Park, and opinions were also taken from the members of the Park family based in the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, said:

*"I'm delighted to see the winning design of the Sir Keith Park statue unveiled at City Hall and look forward to seeing the full scale statue in place in the heart of the capital. It is fitting that the final design for the statue of Sir Keith Park is unveiled here at City Hall, the centre of government for the capital city he did so much to defend in 1940. Without his courage and leadership, the Battle of Britain would probably have been lost, which would have had devastating consequences for not just London but the entire world."*

The unveiling ceremony took place at a breakfast reception in 'London's Living Room' on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of City Hall attended by Deputy Mayor Richard Barnes and Terry Smith, instigator of the Sir Keith Park Memorial Campaign. Battle of Britain veterans, senior RAF officers and high profile supporters of the Campaign such as Edward Fox OBE and Dr Stephen Bungay were present.

Terry Smith said:

*"I'm delighted that today we've unveiled this wonderful design by world-renowned sculptor Les Johnson. It's an exciting time for the Campaign. The support for the Campaign has been phenomenal and is still growing, and now we've selected the design, we'll be submitting detailed plans to Westminster City Council. We very much hope the Council will accept our plans so that this great man, who did so much to defend London, Britain and the world from Nazi tyranny, can be properly remembered in the heart of the city he saved."*

- THE -  
**SIR KEITH PARK**  
- MEMORIAL CAMPAIGN -

The Les Johnson design will be used for both the proposed statue to be exhibited temporarily for 6 months on Trafalgar Square's 4<sup>th</sup> Plinth in 2009, as well as for the proposed permanent memorial statue in Waterloo Place in 2010. The plan is to unveil the permanent memorial to coincide with the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Britain in September 2010.

The Campaign will be submitting detailed planning applications next month to Westminster City Council for both the temporary and permanent memorials.

The temporary statue for the 4<sup>th</sup> Plinth is likely to be nearly 18ft (6m) tall and the permanent bronze memorial statue for Waterloo Place will be nearer 9ft (3m) tall.

## ENDS

For further information please contact:

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## Notes to Editors

- Air Chief Marshal Sir Keith Rodney Park, GCB, KBE, MC and Bar, DFC, RAF** was the New Zealand born RAF Air Vice-Marshal commanding 11 Group Fighter Command, responsible for the aerial defence of London and South East England during the Battle of Britain. His inspirational leadership and tactical brilliance was central to Britain winning the battle, which in turn helped determine the outcome of the entire Second World War. Sir Keith went on to lead the air defence of Malta in 1942, subsequently reaching the rank of Air Chief Marshal in South East Asia at the end of the war. During the First World War, Sir Keith served at Gallipoli and then the Somme before becoming a pilot and shooting down 20 enemy aircraft.
- Unveiling event details: Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October, City Hall - GLA**  
**09:00** Unveiling of statue with media, 'London's Living Room', 9th floor City Hall  
**09:30-11:00** Breakfast reception in 'London's Living Room', 9th floor City Hall
- Media representatives are welcome to attend the event at City Hall on 30<sup>th</sup> October. For security reasons we will need to know your details in advance of the event. Please RSVP to [campaign@sirkeithpark.com](mailto:campaign@sirkeithpark.com). Phone: 020 7200 7332 / 020 7200 7130 Fax: 020 7200 7678
- Details of the winning sculptor, Les Johnson, can be found at:  
<http://www.lesjohnsonsculptor.com>
- Membership of the decision-making group representing the Campaign's Supporters:
  - Terry Smith - Sir Keith Park Memorial Campaign
  - Andrew Cook - foundry expert and business colleague of Terry Smith
  - Terence Stevens-Prior - great great nephew of SKP, representing the Park family
  - Faith Winter - Sculptor - London: Dowding, Harris etc.
  - Alix Baker - Former Chairman of the Armed Forces Art Society

Also in attendance were:

- Tony Dyson - Architect and planning advisor, Donald Insall Associates
- Karl M<sup>c</sup>Cartney - Sir Keith Park Memorial Campaign, Campaign Director

Advice was also sought from Sir Jeremy Isaacs and William Packer (former Art Critic on the FT).

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6. The Campaign was launched on 7<sup>th</sup> March when Battle of Britain pilots, senior serving RAF officers, a great-great niece of Sir Keith Park, politicians and many other supporters assembled in Trafalgar Square beside a full-size replica Spitfire.
7. The Campaign has received support from a broad constituency including the RAF, Battle of Britain veterans, members of the Park family and the New Zealand cricket team. It has also secured the support of the leader of every New Zealand political party, including the Prime Minister and Defence Minister. In this country more than 60 MPs and a number of House of Lords members from all parties, former politicians such as Tony Benn and Lord Tebbit, as well as well-known names such as Sir Patrick Moore, Dan Snow and Edward Fox are backing the Campaign.
8. Over 20 000 people have now signed the various Campaign's petitions, available electronically at <http://www.sirkeithpark.com/petition.aspx> or are signing hard copy versions of the petition both in the UK and in New Zealand.
9. Terry Smith is the Chief Executive of Tullett Prebon PLC and Chairman of Collins Stewart PLC. He has a keen interest in military history.
10. Other supporters of the Campaign include: Algy Cluff; Dr John Hood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford; Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burridge; Air Marshal Clifford Spink; Lord Lee of Trafford; Lord Selkirk; Rt Hon Lord Trefgarne; Mark Field MP; Richard Benyon MP and Hon. Nicholas Soames MP.
11. For more information, please visit our website at [www.sirkeithpark.com](http://www.sirkeithpark.com).