

On this Armed Forces Day we remember and show our appreciation for the contribution by all who serve or have served in Her Majesty's Armed Forces.

Since the beginning of 2014 we have been reflecting on some of the major events of the First World War and only recently have commemorated those who gave their lives in the Battle of Jutland. Very soon our thoughts will turn to the Battle of the Somme, and I am sure many of us here today will have had ancestors involved in some of these battles.

At this time of year my thoughts always return to the Second World War and the D-Day Landings and then the Battle of Britain. Indeed some of our close relatives were part of those offensives.

Let us not forget the Falklands, Iraq, Afghanistan and Northern Ireland. We are eternally grateful to the men and women who have given their lives or been injured physically or mentally to help protect us so that we enjoy the life we have today.

I would like to quote from RAF Shawbury's website a few words which will help us understand a little of the base.

In a typical year 1000 students from across the UK defence and international partners are trained to meet the challenges of military service. The Defence Helicopter Flying School trains

aircrew for all three military services and the Central Flying School (Helicopter) delivers the next generation of helicopter instructors.

The school of Air Operations Control trains the next generation of controllers delivers specific pre-deployment training to those about to deploy on operations and trains instructors.

The mission of RAF Shawbury is to ensure that personnel are robust and resilient as well as technically second to none a 'whole force' of military, civil service and contractor personnel work together to deliver Shawbury's output safely and efficiently.

We here in Wem are particularly grateful to our friends from RAF Shawbury, as many of their personnel live in Wem, or choose to live here on leaving the service, and many of their children attend and contribute greatly to our schools.

Thank you.

I'd like to read a short poem.