Local lifesaving charity unveils reason behind Minerva Owls name

Wednesday 8 August, 2018

A local charity who provide the air ambulance and Critical Care service across Bath, have unveiled the significance behind their Owl's name.

BoB, which is displayed in the Parade Gardens, was designed by Great Western Air Ambulance Charity (GWAAC), and has been painted with 97 sycamore seeds, each representing an emergency which GWAAC was tasked to in Bath and North East Somerset during 2017. The charity has announced the unique meaning of BoB, which is named after their newly launched appeal *Buy our Base*. The charity launched a special appeal asking the public to help them to buy their new air base, which is currently being constructed in Almondsbury.

Their current hangar in Filton is one of the oldest in the country, and unfortunately is no longer meeting the needs of the increasingly busy service. Added to this, the entire site is set to be re-developed, and will no longer be able to host the service.

Ian Cantoni, Community Fundraiser for GWAAC, said: "We are really excited to be a part of the Minerva Owl's trail this year in Bath. Our crew attend to a lot of incidents in Bath, and we really want the local community to know that GWAAC is here for them in times of emergency. The Buy our Base campaign is really important to us as it will ensure our crew, helicopter and Critical Care Cars will be here to serve way in to the future. Owning a base will really make us feel secure and stable."

GWAAC consists of highly skilled Critical Care Doctors and Specialist Paramedics in Critical Care, who are able to carry out life-saving interventions such as blood transfusions, and administer anaesthetics, at the scene of an incident – in effect bringing the skills you would usually find in an Accident & Emergency department to your garden, the roadside, a park or your home.

The new air base will cost GWAAC £2 million to buy, and they are asking you to help them raise £1 million towards this, plus £250,000 to fully kit it out. That is in addition to the £3 million needed by GWAAC each year to stay operational.

To find out more and donate to the Buy our Base appeal visit: www.buyourbase.co.uk

ENDS

Notes for editors

- GWAAC provide the critical care and air ambulance service for 2.1 million people across the counties of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire, North Somerset and surrounding areas.
- In 2018 the charity celebrates ten years since its first flight.
- In 2017 the Critical Care Team attended 1,824 jobs: by helicopter and by one of our critical care cars.
- We need to raise over £3 million each year to stay operational, but receive no day to day funding from the Government or National Lottery.

For further information, contact:

Lucy Munn

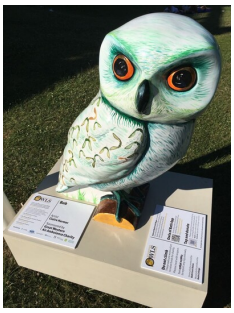
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