

On This Day – 1st July 1939

Central Scotland Airport is officially opened in Grangemouth



Luftwaffe surveillance image of Grangemouth, highlighting the airport

precincts.

In 1939 Scottish Aviation secured over 500 acres of land outside Grangemouth, promising to build what would become the largest airport in the country. It was a plan which had been bandied around since the 1920s, intended to bring civil aviation directly to the centre of Scotland. It was opened by Viscount Trenchard, known as the 'Father of the RAF' for his role in its founding in 1918. This VIP presence would something of a harbinger of Grangemouth's future – a few months after the ribbon cutting the Second World War broke out, and the site was taken over by the air force.

The main use of the site was to train pilots from various allied nations – namely Australia, Canada, Belgium, Czechoslovakia and the US. Seventy-one pilots were killed during training at RAF Grangemouth, and are now remembered in a memorial wall on the former site of the airfield.

It was used briefly post-war for glider training, but was ultimately closed in 1955, never living up to its full potential; it's expansive ground eaten up by the growing petrochemical industries, housing estates and shopping

More information:

[Airfield of Britain Conservation Trust](#)

[Control Towers](#)

[Grangemouth Heritage Trust](#)