



## New Forest Aviation Group.

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### Newsletter No. 202, July 2015

#### 2015 TALKS

10th July 'Air to Air Refuelling in the South Atlantic War including the Vulcan Bombing Raid on the Falklands' by Barry Neal  
August No Meeting  
11th September 'Spitfire Mk26 - Build and Fly' by Martin Laking  
9th October 'Portsmouth Aviation Aerocar' by Bob Wealthy  
13th November 'The Canberra' by Phil Nelson  
December No Meeting

#### 2016 TALKS

8<sup>th</sup> January 'Battle of Britain - 1935' by Stephen Robson,  
12th Feb – TBD,  
11<sup>th</sup> March AGM then 'Sopwith Bat Boat' by Bob Wealthy,  
8<sup>th</sup> April 'Flying & Displaying Vintage Aircraft' by Rod Dean

Our June talk, entitled Buccaneer, was by John Myers a former Squadron and RAF display pilot for the type. His career had progressed through the usual 'fast jet' training of BAe Hawk, Hawker Hunter and then onto the Buccaneer which did not have a dual control trainer version. After briefing it was a case of get in and do it. After Honington with 15 Sqn, postings to Germany followed with a term as the RAF Buccaneer display pilot, a role that ultimately led John into flying with the Red Arrows. An exchange posting gave him an interesting experience in flying the A6 Intruder and after the RAF a role as Chief Pilot at Cobham.

Naval Requirement/Aircraft 39 (with a less known specification number of M148) called for a tactical, strike reconnaissance (TSR!) aircraft capable of delivering nuclear weapons to shore and ship targets at low level. Expansion in Russia's Navy, in particular the heavily armed Sverdlov Class had spurred the need for the long range low level requirement with the Red Beard nuclear free fall bomb as a solution to those ships. The Blackburn B103 design Buccaneer was accepted to meet the spec with its advanced features of area ruled fuselage, internal bomb load carried on a rotating bomb bay and boundary layer control. The latter consisted of slots near the front of the wings, across the flaps and the leading edge of the tail plane fed by air from the engine compressors to accentuate the coanda effect and give considerably more lift at slow speeds. Conversely the engines had to be run at high power to provide the air during the landing phase so a large tail mounted air brake was introduced to provide the necessary drag to reduce landing speeds. John reiterated that speed on the approach was controlled more by the air brake than throttle control as normal on a conventional aircraft. The attack profile was to lob the bomb from a short sharp climb giving the weapon a known trajectory and range such that the aircraft could turn and depart before anti-aircraft weapons were brought to bear. The trajectory and release point were all worked out by an analogue computer (i.e. cogs and cables) which despite their complexity proved very effective. Ordinary 'iron' bombs could also be carried but their effectiveness was enhanced by the addition of laser guidance known as Paveway. A target would be 'lit' by a laser beam from a pod carried by a fellow Buccaneer, the bomb would be released and a detector in a bolt on nose guidance system would steer the bomb to the point of laser radiation. In the first Gulf War the aged Buccaneers were needed to help the newer Tornados which were not equipped to illuminate their targets. The Buccaneer was faster and had a longer range than Tornado, often completing their mission without refuelling unlike the Tornado.

The USA had created a battle area known as Red Flag which consisted of a large area of desert set up with targets and defence airfields which permitted realistic target runs. Defence was by several USAAF types of interceptor and ground anti aircraft units configured to represent Russian counterparts. The RAF had been challenged to fly 'against' the USA and the Buccaneers were chosen perhaps because there would be little loss of face if such an old aircraft failed against its USAF superiors. In the event the Buccaneer proved what a superb aircraft it was in its specified low level role and achieved a 'clean' run – never before managed by the USAF.