



New Forest Aviation Group.

website: www.nfagroup.tk

Chairman: Steve Robson
Vice Chairman: Chris Gilbert-Norton
Hon. Treasurer: Roy Arnold
Hon. Secretary: Fred Hambly
Hinton Villa, Fathersfield, Brockenhurst, SO42 7TH Tel: 01590 622681
E-mail: fredhambly@tiscali.co.uk
Speaker Secretary: Steve Robson Tel: 01202 300763 E-mail: stephen.robson10@btopenworld.com
Additional Committee: Phillip Arnold, Fred Hambly, Monty Ward,

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2013 TALKS

September 13th – “The Falklands War-a very personal view” by Dave Morgan, D.S.C.
October 11th – “Hurricanes to Murmansk” by Air Cdre Philip Wilkinson, CVO, FRAeS, RAF (Rtd)
November 8th – “The Supersonic Adventure” by Colin Hobbs
December – No meeting.
10th Jan 2014 - 'Enigma and its coding' by Alan Watson

Friday 13th September was a lucky day for NFAG when Dave Morgan gave us a talk about his personal view on the Falklands campaign. As a Harrier pilot in the RAF he was posted to Yeovilton for a RAF/RN exchange tour in April 1982. Within hours he was preparing to sail with the Fleet on its way down South in HMS Hermes. Ships were hurriedly victualled in 24hour operations and ironically amongst the food loads were crates of Argentinean corned beef. The first leg of just over 4000 miles to Ascension Island was spent in preparing ships and aircraft for war, although during that time there were furious diplomatic efforts to try and prevent a military conflict. For example the white part of each RAF roundel was over painted in blue to reduce conspicuousness and critical readiness drills were practiced to improve readiness and reaction times. Each pilot practiced dropping his war load whilst operating with the big bow ramp. The Harrier at that time did not have any infra red or radar defences and Dave worked out a system to store chaff behind the speed brake and a simple release mechanism to dispense the chaff when opened. Following a brief interlude at Ascension it soon became obvious that diplomacy would fail and the fleet set forth for the second 4000 mile leg with all the practices of the first leg being refined in earnest. Early contact was made with an Argentinean Boeing 707 which was warned away on the threat of being shot down. South Georgia was retaken on 25th April after a short but intense operation and the fleet settled into the task of defending itself and identifying targets with initial attacks being made on the air base at Stanley. The iconic phrase of the late Brian Hanrahan 'I counted them all out and I counted them all back' was coined on the first



bombing raid on 1st May during which Dave's aircraft received a hole in its fin. The raid had used a mixture of toss bombing from different directions needing some very good coordination to avoid mishaps such as flying through debris. Low flying was required to avoid radar but when the radar warning receivers lit up the pilots flew even lower – estimated at 15feet above the water – and over flying the airfield around (rather than over) the control tower. An Argentinean intelligence gathering ship Narwal was attacked, with Dave and his colleague plastering the ship with cannon and bomb which disabled the ship without sinking it. Our special forces wanted to use the ship but it was in fact too badly damaged.