



New Forest Aviation Group.

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2015 TALKS

13th November 'The Canberra' by Phil Nelson
December No Meeting

2016 TALKS

8th January 'Battle of Britain - 1935' by Stephen Robson- foundations that enabled the 'Few' to succeed
12th Feb - An Airborne View by Ian Haskell
11th March AGM then 'Sopwith Bat Boat' by Bob Wealthy,
8th April 'Flying & Displaying Vintage Aircraft' by Rod Dean
13th May 'The Cowboy, the Revolutionary and the Novelist - three unsung aviation pioneers" by Graham Spiller

PORTSMOUTH AEROCAR

Bob Wealthy gave our October talk on the Portsmouth Aerocar. Before WW2 the Portsmouth and Southsea and Isle of Wight Aviation Services had provided air services to the locality such as Ryde and Bournemouth. They expanded to provide maintenance services and in due course changed their name to Portsmouth Aviation in the early part of WW2. At this time they ventured into making a utility light aircraft to serve these and other local routes. This aircraft was the Portsmouth Aviation Aerocar which prototype first flew on 18th June 1947 by Flt Lt Luxmore DFC following a few taxi trials earlier in the day, and it was shown at the SBAC later that year.



It was a twin-engine twin boom high wing monoplane using the Blackburn Cirrus Major engine of 155hp driving Rotol twin bladed variable pitch propellers. The passenger cabin could accommodate 5 passengers and the under-slung design meant that access was as easy as getting into a car. It was meant to have a range of uses with the publicity brochure showing scenes of a private / light executive transport or flying office, aerial pick up or even a float-plane or ski plane version.

Bob described the structure and features using an explanatory cutaway drawing noting that the prototype was of part wooden construction whilst the production model would be of full metal construction. The vision for the aircraft came from Lionel Balfour who was the joint managing director of the company and he had anticipated the post war need for this type of aircraft to pick up where PSIOWA had been in the 30's. Practicality, versatility and simplicity were the key tenets of its design which engendered much interest despite the prototype being a little under powered and overweight. Despite the promising start, the financial success depended upon an order from India but the partition of India in 1947 destroyed any hope of an order during the turmoil. The project was abandoned in 1948 when, to survive, the company restructured and focussed on other fields of engineering work including the manufacture of bus bodies.

