

## VULCAN, THE FLYING SHADOW

### Successful European appearance of the Vulcan

The year of 2009 is not the year the Vulcan came alive again since it saw itself already presented in 2008 on different events but sure you may say the appearance or should we say reappearance of the Vulcan was this year for a much bigger public. A larger tour than before was set up bringing the aircraft even to the mainland. Thousands enjoyed the displays which revived nostalgic feelings and utterly proud with many of the spectators.

### Iconic warbird

Of all British designed aircraft the Vulcan must be the symbol of English aircraft designing expertise and it is a truly iconic warbird. Thanks to its unique shape the Vulcan calls upon your imagination and is because of this heroic to many. Strange enough the appearance in battle zone was very limited with only exposure to war acts in the Falklands when Port Stanley was bombed. Nevertheless the type played a tremendous role in the cold war balance when the Vulcan was appointed to carry Britain's nuclear deterrent capability.

### V-force

Sadly when the nuclear role was transferred to the submarines the Vulcan was withdrawn from use in 1984 leaving a headache with many pilots to loose their magnificent shaped bomber. When looking at facts it was inevitable considering the Vulcan was big and slow and expensive to operate. Designed in 1948 by Roy Chadwick (prototype in 1952) the Vulcan was an immediate success in that time and formed together with the Handley page Victor and the Vickers Valiant the so called V-force. Despite the beautiful shape and powerful look and that the airplane exactly did where it was designed for no one could prevent the nearer end. Just old generation of avionics, limited performance in speed and the rapidly developing world of attack systems and threats made the Vulcan obsolete and it was shifted from its task following decommission.

### Back to the Sky

Like all things to be proud of also the Vulcan draw attention and a initiative was born in 1993 when the XH558 was sold to the Walton Family. A movement started resulting in a thrust funds to bring the Vulcan back to the sky. The funds earned much publicity. With a main role for David Walton and the Walton family the Vulcan to the Sky Trust worked hard at Bruntingthorpe aerodrome in Leicesterhire to restore XH558 into an airworthy and safe airplane again. The project to restore XH558 needed 7 million pounds and a composite of donors including the Walton family but also 2.7 million pounds from the heritage lottery fund and many, many, many people (20.000) with small donations finally reached the amount of money to complete the work in a 15 year period. Because of this great deal of the ordinary people the aircraft is called 'the peoples aircraft'. Finally the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) gave permission to fly and XH558 became G-VLCN to go in the sky as a civilian aircraft! XH558 became a unique attraction and with flying permission different from the only two brothers in arms, the XM655 at Wellesbourne Mountford and XL426/G-VJET at Southend which are capable and permitted to taxi runs only.

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## Treat to the public

XH558 took part this year in displays at DCAE Cosford, RIAT at Fairford, Volkel air base in the Netherlands and different other events in the United Kingdom. Like in the old days the Vulcan 'howl' was heard from the four Olympus engines and displays by the hand of captain Martin Withers causing the 'Vulcan effect' on the public while watching the magnificent beautiful aircraft floating in the sky. For many people it is now or never because no one knows how long the big money consuming project will be able to keep the Vulcan in the Sky. Hope it is crisis proof.

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