

Poole was now quite congested with different aircraft, military and civilian units with their bases surrounding the area. RAF Hamworthy was home to 210Sqn with Catalinas and RAAF 461Sqn with Sunderland which in 1943 sunk three U-Boats. BOAC operated from Salterns with their Empire flying boats and Clippers. The RNAS operated from Sandbanks, nicknamed HMS Tadpole, as a training and air sea rescue base with a collection of Fairey Swordfish, Fairey Seafox, Supermarine Walrus and Vought Kingfisher. By the end of the war with the Empire Boats superseded by Sunderlands or Solents, Poole enjoyed a brief period of use with BOAC using its transatlantic terminal but land planes were on the ascendancy and first Hurn started the rot followed by the move for the Empire boats back to Southampton before finally succumbing to the inevitable.



BOURNEMOUTH AIRSHOW

The great British summer once again played havoc with the four day Bournemouth Air Festival last month. On the first day, Thursday, traditionally the “warm up” day it actually turned out to be the best day weather wise for flying, with cloud and unseasonal strong winds causing the organisers to cancel any daytime flying on the Saturday. However the Eurofighter Typhoon, Red Arrows and The Blades did get airborne on Saturday evening when the wind had lessened slightly.



The BBMF Lancaster only flew on the Thursday, as crosswinds were considered too risky for this highly valuable aircraft on the other three days and the RNHF Swordfish was also grounded at Yeovilton. A first for the Air festival this year was a Eurocopter “Cougar” helicopter, a development and upgrade of the Puma, operated and displayed by the Swiss Air Force. They had flown to the UK from their base near Payerne and gave a very impressive and agile display. The Dutch Air Force Historic Flight flew the B-25 Mitchell on Thursday & Sunday. Also making its first appearance at Bournemouth was a BAC Strikemaster, essentially an armed version of the Jet Provost Mk5 in Omani Air Force colours. Oman purchased 12 examples. They were used during the Dhofar rebellion and three were shot down over the course of the war.

The Breitling Wingwalker pilots and girls must be congratulated for displaying in drizzle and a brisk wind on Sunday, the girls apparently being subjected to 150mph raindrops in their faces whilst rolling and looping, strapped into their harnesses on the top wings of two Boeing Stearmans.

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