

**AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO. XL568
SECTION 2B**

**HAWKER HUNTER.T.7A XL568/9224M
MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER X002-9718**

- 1957/8 Built by Hawker Aircraft Ltd at Kingston (contract number 6/Acft/12626) as one of the first production batch (XL563-XL579) of T.7 two seat trainers built at Kingston, delivered from December 1957. 45 T.7s were eventually built for the RAF, plus six converted from single seat F.4 fighters.
- 6 Mar 58 First Flight.
- 30 May 58 Awaiting Collection- to Handling Squadron
- 9 Jul 58 Returned to Manufacturers
- 20 Oct 58 To No.5 Maintenance Unit, Kemble, Glos
- 25 Dec 58 To the Hunter F.4/F.6 equipped No.74 Squadron at RAF Horsham St. Faith (Moved to RAF Coltishall from June 1959); in 1960 it carried an overall silver finish with yellow bands on wings and rear fuselage, black serials and aircraft code 'X' on fin and Squadron symbol Tiger's Head with black and yellow markings on the nose. Many operational Hunter squadrons were issued with a two-seat example for instrument flying training and other duties. Photo- Hunters-The Hawker Hunter In British Military Service (M.W. Bowman) p.54. Colour profile – The Hawker Hunter – a Comprehensive Guide (Bradley 2009) p.54
- 22 July 59 Involved in the Daily Mail Bleriot Anniversary Air Race between London and Paris, won by a team led by Squadron Leader C.G. Maughan, the CO of No.65 Squadron. He completed the course between Marble Arch and the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, in a time of 40 minutes 44 seconds, travelling by RAF Police motorcycle, Bristol Sycamore Helicopter, and this particular Hunter T.7, flown by Flt. Lt Steggall; the prize money of £6,500 was donated to charity.
- Nov 60 No.74 Squadron completed its conversion from the Hunter to the English Electric Lightning F.1; however, XL568 remained with the squadron after the conversion.
- 11 Apr 63 Damaged in accident, category 3R (repairable)
- 24 Apr 63 Repaired on site by No. 60 Maintenance Unit; repairs completed 23 May 63; returned to No.74 Squadron strength.
- 28 Sep 64 To Hawker Siddeley for modification to T.7A standard. Conversion completed 31 May 1965.

1 Jun 65 Newly modified aircraft to Ministry of Aviation for further trials work, at Hawker Siddeley Aviation at Dunsfold for trial installation of windscreen wipers, trials continuing until 30th June 1965.

18 Aug 65 Returned to No.74 Squadron at RAF Leuchars.

22 Jul 66 To No. 5 MU.

30 Nov 66 Allotted to Royal Aircraft Establishment, Bedford for continuation training, instrument rating and flying practice.

24 Apr 67 Aircraft received at Ministry of Technology, Farnborough from No.5 MU Kemble, Gos. for preparation for RAE Bedford.

1 Jul 67 Aircraft despatched from RAE Farnborough.

3 Jul 67 Aircraft received at RAE Bedford for miscellaneous support duties replacing Hunter 6 WW598, and also instrument rating and flying practice replacing Meteor T.7 VW411.

22 Dec 67 Sold to Ministry of Technology for £72,000.

3 Mar 70 Aircraft exchanged for Hunter T.7 XL612.

4 Mar 70 To No. 5 MU Kemble

13 Apr 70 No. 12 Squadron at RAF Honington, who operated the Buccaneer from October 1969, flying from RAF Lossiemouth from August 1980.

1 Apr 71 No. 237 Operational Conversion Unit (OCU)

28 Sep 72 No. 15 Squadron

24 Jan 73 Station Flight, RAF Laarbruch, West Germany.

24 Aug 77 Returned to No. 237 OCU.

11 Jan 79 Station Flight, RAF Laarbruch.

19 Mar 80 No. 237 OCU

4 Jul 80 No. 216 Squadron

1 Aug 80 To RAF Lossiemouth with No. 12 Squadron

15 Sep 83 To RAF Abingdon for major overhaul.

18 Apr 84 Returned to No. 12 Squadron at Lossiemouth.

- 1 Jul 86 No. 237 OCU who supported Nos. 12/208 Squadrons of the Buccaneer Maritime Buccaneer Wing. The Hunters, with their ability to pull high 'g' gave initial dual-control training to Buccaneer captains in the critical angle of attack profiles necessary when flying the 'Brick'.
- One of six Hunters fitted with similar cockpit instrumentation to the Buccaneer as Hunter T.7As to aid training and check flights, the latter occurring two or three times a year for Buccaneer pilots.
- 4 Jul 86 No. 12 Squadron Leader M. Wood RAF
- 7 Dec 87 No. 237 OCU Lossiemouth
- 16 Mar 88 No. 208 Squadron
- 19 April 88 No. 12 Squadron
- 29 Jun 88 No. 208 Squadron
- 12 Jul 88 No. 237 OCU
- 3 Aug 88 No. 12 Squadron, Lossiemouth
- 2 Dec 88 No. 237 OCU, still at Lossiemouth.
- 31 May 91 Two aircraft appeared as one of four Hunters (including XL568) given all-over matt black colour scheme to commemorate the retirement of former 'Black Arrows' Hunter formation team leader ACM Sir Patrick 'Paddy' Hine, and the Hunter's 40th birthday on 20th July. Painted specially for this event by No. 237 OCU. On this date the two Hunters formed part of a fly-past over the RAF High Wycombe headquarters of Sir Patrick as the retiring AOC in C RAF Strike Command.
- 2 Aug 91 As part of the Hunter's 40th birthday celebrations, the four Hunters made formation flypasts over six Hunter associated airfields, leaving Lossiemouth at 09.40 en route to West Raynham, Wittering, refuelling at Lyneham, then moving on to overfly Dunsfold, Chivenor, refuelling again at Lyneham, where X1568 developed a technical snag and returned home the following Monday. Photo – Aircraft Illustrated November 1991 p.608.
- Later appeared at various air displays. Photo in black; Aircraft Illustrated April 1993 p.24.
- Oct 91 237 (Buccaneer) OCU disbanded with wind down of the Buccaneer force, and the last six Hunters, including XL568, continued to serve with the Maritime Strike Wing until the final Buccaneer crew conversions in 1992, with problems due to lack of spares.

Typical sorties with the OCU included many local training flights around Lossiemouth, some instrument flying and transit flights, high and low level sorties, air tests and the occasional air-to-air combat training flight.

- 20 Oct 93 Final training flight; by this time it was one of the last two T.7As flying with the Maritime Strike Wing.
- 16 Nov 93 Final flight, from RAF Lossiemouth to RAF Cranwell, Lincs. The captain's name was Phillips, from No. 208 Squadron. (The last RAF Hunter T.7 and Buccaneer aircraft retired with the disbandment of 208 Squadron on 31 March 1994)
- 19 Nov 93 Issued instructional serial 9224M.
- Used for ground instructional training with the Aircraft Maintenance Instruction Flight/Airframe Technology Flight
- 12 Feb 02 Delivered to RAF Cosford by Aircraft Salvage and Transportation Flight ('Crash n' Smash) and assembled in RAF hangar.
- 28 Feb 02 Moved to RAFM Cosford site. Photo on display- Flypast August 2002 p.8.
- 2005/6 Undergoing restoration in the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre, RAFM Cosford, prior to installation in the Cold War Hall. Photo – Flypast September 2005 p.6. Repainted in overall silver and No. 74 Squadron colours – photo Flypast May 2006 p.16.
- 26 April 06 Moved into new National Cold War Exhibition building at Cosford for suspended display. Photo – Flypast July 2006 p.20. Photos on display in the new building, which opened to the public 8 February 2007 – Aeroplane March 2007 pp.13-14.

TEXT; ANDREW SIMPSON

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