



Through the Barrier: Flying Fast Jets in the RAF and USAF

Air Vice-Marshal Clive Evans CBE DL

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Clive Evans had a lengthy front-line flying career in which he flew Hunters, Canberras and Lightnings. Apart from his personnel experiences he describes all these types in considerable detail, explaining technical details and the nuances of each type. The final fast jet he flew was during a three year posting to the USA to evaluate the General Dynamics F-111 that the British Government were considering purchasing. It was at the end of that overseas tour that he was severely wounded in a car crash whilst driving to the airport to return to the UK.

Despite teetering on death's doorstep for several months he finally recovered but his injuries put an end to flying fast jets. Never the less, his return to duty involved becoming Project Officer for the design of the new Tornado, followed by a year at Staff College where he became Personal Staff Officer to the Air Marshall tasked with procuring new air systems for the services. He returned to flying by converting to the Hercules and became CO of 24 Squadron and took part in the Cyprus emergency of 1974.

Clive then became Station Commander at RAF Lyneham which suddenly became the main transport base for supplying our forces during the Falklands War. He drove the Station to unprecedented levels of effort and devised the program to train the crews to become capable of air-to-air refueling that was vital during the long distances flown over the Atlantic Ocean. The Falkland Islands would again feature when having been promoted to Air Commodore he was sent there as Deputy Commander of all British Forces.

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