## HAWKER AIRCRAFT, HAWKER SIDDELEY & BRITISH AEROSPACE IN KINGSTON

H.G.Hawker Engineering 1920 - 1935 Hawker Aircraft 1935 - 1963 Hawker Siddeley Aviation 1963 - 1977 British Aerospace 1977 - 1992

## **Brief History**

In 1920 the Sopwith Aviation team re-started as H. G. Hawker Engineering Co., named after their pilot Harry Hawker.

New aircraft were sold in small numbers until Sydney Camm became Chief Designer in 1925.

**3,000 of Sydney Camm's Hart and Fury biplanes were built through the 1930s**, making Hawker very profitable. Hawker's success allowed Tommy Sopwith to buy other British aircraft companies and form Hawker Siddeley Aircraft

Hundreds of Sydney Camm's Hurricane monoplane fighters were in service from the start of the war. 14,000 were built and it became the most successful allied fighter. Camm's Typhoon and Tempest fighters were also invaluable in ground attack and intercepting V1 flying bombs.

From 1948 the company, always based in Kingston, moved to the Richmond Road factory, with Dunsfold Aerodrome for final assembly and flight testing.

Sir Sydney Camm's jet aircraft were equally successful, 2,500 Sea Hawks and Hunters were built.

Ralph Hooper secured Hawker's future when he devised the vertical take-off P.1127 and its Harrier development.

Under Chief Designer John Fozard the Harrier became the only successful vertical take-off combat aircraft. Over 800 were sold.

As **Chief Engineer Ralph Hooper** directed the design of the Hawk advanced trainer and light fighter. Nearly 1000 had been sold by 2012.

By 1977, when it was nationalised into British Aerospace, Sir Thomas Sopwith's Hawker Siddeley Aviation owned half of Britain's aircraft industry.

The Kingston team went on to develop and produce advanced versions of the Harrier and Hawk with McDonnell Douglas in America, before the operation was closed by British Aerospace in 1992.

The aviation industry was the largest employer in Kingston for most of the 20th century.

27,000 Kingston designed aircraft were built between 1920 and 1992, often providing much needed work for other Hawker Siddeley companies.

## Some notable achievements



The Hawker Fury was the first 200 mph aircraft in the RAF

At times in the 1930s 80% of aircraft in the RAF were Hawker biplanes

The Hawker Hurricane was the first 300 mph aircraft in the RAF and the most successful fighter in the Battle of Britain

The Hawker Typhoon was the first 400 mph aircraft in the RAF

The Royal Navy bought 420 Hawker Sea Hawks, their largest fleet of jet aircraft

> In 1953 a Hawker Hunter took the world speed record to 727mph

Harriers were in RAF service for over 40 years and are still used by the US Marines in 2012

> The Hawk was the RAF's last all British aircraft and is still in service around the world in 2012

