



BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005



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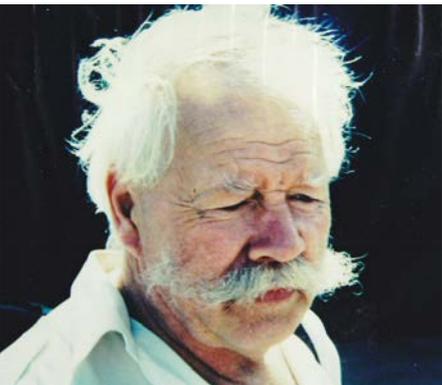
WHO REMEMBERS WHEN
The snow reached the top of the street lamps and people from the village were walking on top of the snow - it was so quiet and peaceful, people could be heard talking from some distance, without the day to day noise pollution of traffic, and for that matter aircraft.

During this night the wind speed across the airfield reached 50 mph and blew the snow off the airfield on to the main road.

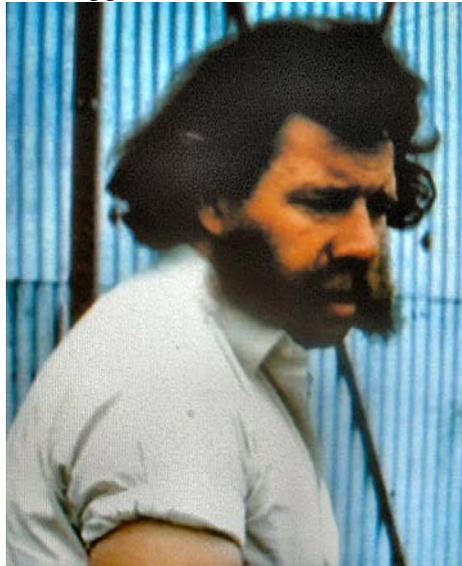
The snow fence had been erected to stop the snow (prevailing westerly) from blowing onto the airfield.

Note: angle of fence !!

HAIR AGETH THE MAN !



In the beginning we were young and rugged !!



The sun shone brightly every day 50 years before.



We were also young and vain, but now we're wiser.



Better looking perhaps.





Grey is so reverend. For those fervently interested in aircraft.



These younger days were without care and responsibility.



People like these kept our fighter aircraft airborne !!



DoUknowoteyemeen!



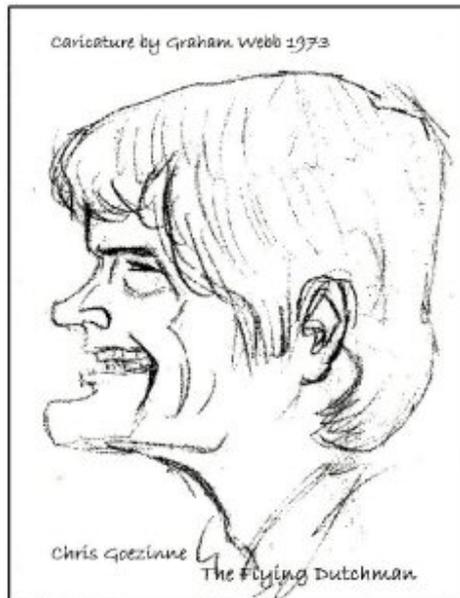
I will have to start from here...!!



This Catalina PBV – N423RS was flown into Biggin Hill 2 years ago by Chris Goezinne for a respray. From this point in time it didn't materialise according to the primary plan.



During preparation for painting, some corrosion was detected and further delays by the discovery of more prohibiting corrosion. The aircraft could not be put back to flying condition ...ahH!!



Finally it was decided to dis-assemble for shipment to America.

These specific aircraft were made for a purpose.

Well built, the fuselage was quite strong and the wing structure was unique and equally very strong

This aircraft type was built some 70 years ago along with many others no doubt constructed by hundreds of workers, requiring minimum maintenance at dedicated wartime bases.

It wasn't very fast, but had 2,500nm range which made it useful in detecting enemy submarines and being amphibian it rescued hundreds of sailors from sunken merchant supply vessels and naval ships.

They were used across the Pacific and Atlantic oceans to great effect.

In fact these aircraft were flown in military service until 1980.

Whilst the Catalina looks big, it is not until you see it dismantled that you become aware of its real size.

Total built 3,305. It had a wingspan of 104ft, length 63ft, height 21ft, tailplane 30ft, equal to one outer wing section.

Mid wing section spanned 42ft and weighed about 3,360lb.

Empty weight of aircraft 20,910lb

Max take off weight 35,420lb.

The wing was a large fuel tank.



The construction of the centre section ribbing continued to the outer section and filled with fuel which gave the 2,500nm range.



One of the R-1830 engines 900HP



Outer wing section components packed with special heat treated wood for shipment to USA, a customs botanic regulation.



Several of these items packed safely will be inserted into 40ft containers, not sure how many containers will take as there are

many sizable sections in separate packages to be protected in transit. Chris brings the coffee prior to lifting the centre section wing and final checks, because once it is released, there will be no going back.



The fuselage is released from its large wing after 70 years and is being prepared for trestling, even so the minimum width of the hull is 10ft 6" when the wheels are retracted. The length remains at 61ft and height at 14ft or a bit less.



The cockpit of the Catalina was a little austere but functional, everything being accessible with good visibility.

The next major step for this old lady will be the humiliating road transport to Southampton followed by a long sea crossing packed in 40ft containers. The fuselage as mentioned will be supported on trestles, with an outer covering.

CHRIS GOEZINNE:



Chris appeared at Biggin Hill one night in 1973 to keep an appointment with a flying club

which had shut its doors and gone home for the night. (winter).

Chris was a Qualified Engineer on large merchant ships travelling the world and therefore had developed some navigation skills.

He gained his PPL in 4 weeks and his aviation career took-off.

He joined Garuda Airlines as a Flt Engineer rising to Captain on the DC10'S flying to Indonesia and beyond on the HAJ runs to Mecca.

He also flew the 747's.

He is also a pilot for the Dutch Dakota Association, seen with their DC3 Flag Ship PH-DDA.

This aircraft suffered a tragic accident killing 32 near Texel.



This old document was discovered by Singh Bamhra, Falcon Aviation, during his current pilgrimage to India visiting the mystic powers that be..!

This parchment was discovered in a disused aviation office stacked to the ceiling with old papers.

A legacy left by the Colonial British days of India.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Expedition fjord on Axel Helleberg Island in the high Arctic, 60 miles SW of the Eureka Weather Station on Ellsmere Island. The ski Landing is on a small lake surrounded by hills so makes for some interesting flying



Rhys Perraton's Flag Ship – August 1981 Duxford auction, With the Miles Falcon, Cobby helps Faulkner taxi in with the Arrow Sport, built in the 1920's This was sold along with the editors favourite Rearwin PAA Sportster monoplane. More about the Arrow Sport to follow

