



BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005




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THE ARROW SPORT PLANE



Part of the Phillip Mann collection of vintage aircraft, most of which are still flying in the UK.

The above Arrow Sport was rebuilt by Cobaircraft of Biggin Hill Airport. (see January Bugle issue).

The Arrow Aircraft and Motor Corporation (Lincoln, Neb) was formed in 1925 and was to sell for \$1,300, however a fire at the LeBlond engine factory (Motor Corporation) had the undesired effect of raising the original price to \$2,300.

This particular aircraft arrived in many boxes, no wing bracing wires nor a set of structurally sound wheels.

Not a bad looking airplane it was somewhat underpowered initially. A more powerful engine was fitted later which improved performance.

The flying controls were reported as a little daunting following any input to change direction, or just keep it straight and level.

Dismay perhaps, comes to mind..!



Securely strapped in, our test pilot studies the limited instruments within the open cockpit before engine start.



One careful circuit followed by a careful landing on 29 grass in August 1980

Taxiing back to the hangar our test pilot's expression says it all as he admitted 'we have some problems'.



Whilst a few brave aviators flew this airplane, none have shown a particular desire to repeat their experiences in this two seat open cockpit sport airplane produced in the 1920's - 1930's.

The history of this creation remains somewhat vague.



G-AARO now hangs serenely from the glazed ceiling of the National Advar Hazy Center instead of skimming through the skies above, whereas those that had achieved a successful flight in this machine can look up and say, "I flew that".

This National Air and Space Museum houses many unique aircraft including the B29 Enola Gay which dropped the Atomic Bomb on Japan, WWII.

PHILLIP MANN COLLECTION

Making their way to Duxford for an Aviation Auction, April 1983. The Arrow Sport above is followed by the Miles Falcon and others pictured below arriving at Duxford.



The Prtoctor can be seen in the rear with the Arrow Sport, Miles Falcon and the Rearwin Cloudster. The Rearwin and Arrow were sold and two more excess pilots were bundled into the Prentice which struggled to get airborne with the excess weight imposed on it.



CATALINA LEAVES BIGGIN



STRIPPED - TO BARE BONES

After two years in the hangar this aircraft has been prepared for road transport to Southampton docks complete with trestles. The wheels will be retracted when loaded to reduce road width. The trailer was extended to 60 ft to match the fuselage length.

It has been a massive exercise stripping down to transportable sections. The outer wings, leading edges (30ft in length) floats and cowlings and two engines occupied to large shipping containers. All wood used for packing had to be heat treated for import into the USA customs requirements.



The Rearwin Cloudster went to the USA along with the Arrow Sport. Its whereabouts are currently unknown. It was quite a nice airplane to fly with a large wide cockpit, such was the luxury of this esteemed flight trainer.

CENTRE OF GRAVITY ?



Testing the initial lift for loading from the wing attachment point was a little bit nose heavy. Removing the nose wheel corrected this problem perfectly.



CENTRE SECTION 42 FEET



Attaching trestles, for lifting onto the second transporter.



FINAL LOADING ACHIEVED

As the temperature got lower outside and darkness approached the convoy departed for Southampton docks where the drivers would stay with their cargo for the night, ready for loading on to a cargo ship for the USA.

IF IT DOESN'T HAVE WINGS



It is not an aeroplane, besides its wheels aren't big enough. It could be better used as a trailer for your garden rubbish.

IS THIS SUPPOSED TO FLY.?



Perhaps the one without wings being ejected from its hangar is not so far off the mark after all.



This centre section was 27 inches in depth and 8 feet wide. Basically a fuel tank, the outer wing sections tapered toward the wingtip were 30 feet in length. They too, were part of the fuel tank.



HANGAR IS CLOSED. 'Op it.!

WHAT ABOUT THIS IDEA ?



Well it seems to work at the moment. The pilot is able to wear a fashionable suit with a hat, this looks far more practicable. Excellent visibility, no blind spots.!