



BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005

CLUB AND AIRPORT NEWS

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THE ROLLS ROYCE CAR

This is a wonderful story sent in by one of our 'Bugle' readers.....

Mr Allen Swift (Springfield M.A. - home of the famous Springfield Rifle). He received his RR Piccadilly P1 Roadster from his father as a graduation gift in 1928. He drove it until his death last year at the age of 102.

He was the oldest living owner of a car from new.

It was donated to a Springfield museum after his death with 170,000 on the clock.

The car still runs like a Swiss Watch; is silent at any speed and is in perfect condition.



was Sgt Howard Squire seen here in his RAF uniform.

completion of the rebuild only two years ago, months before his death at 90 years of age.

INTERESTING REBUILD



Taking to the skies again, flying over Biggin Hill after decades of lying in a river, in Yorkshire.

This stunning picture followed a painstaking rebuild over 8 years costing some £3,000,000.

The rebuild was carried out by many dedicated enthusiasts using genuine spare parts found from various places.

The rebuild was under the direction of Mr Peter Monk, a former airline pilot and enthusiast for rebuilding these wonderful aircraft without which we all may have been living under a different set of rules.

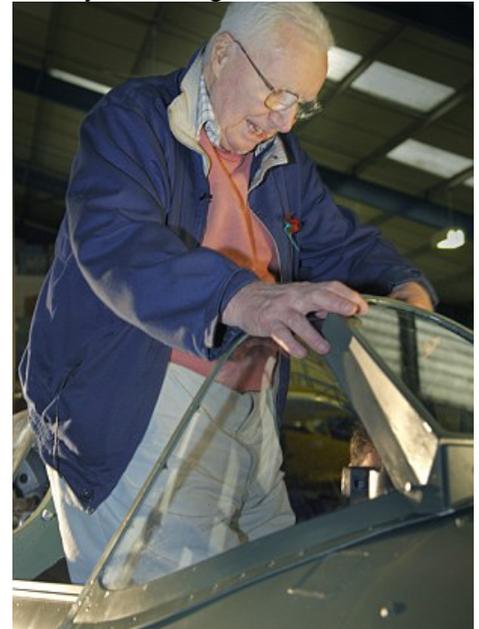
The original pilot of this aircraft



It was during a training exercise being taught the importance of staying very close.

They got a little too close by colliding, with both pilots bailing out.

Howard is pictured here climbing into the cockpit once again near



Howard was shot down over Calais in 1941 and spent the rest of the year as a POW.

Whilst he may not have had a very good fighter pilot career he occupied quite a few Germans to keeping him interned.

IN MEMORY OF RON TATE



Ronald Reginald Tate was born on 10th March 1928 and died 26th January 2012.

Ron had been around Biggin Hill for many years.

Ron grew up during the war years and looked forward to joining the RAF to do his bit to defend his country.

Unfortunately at war's end he was just 17 years old and there was a glut of pilots.

Undeterred he joined a Parachute Regiment which meant he could at least be flying, if only for a short time before jumping out of the aircraft and flying under a silk canopy.



Did the enemy know what was waiting for them across the channel. We think, this is why 'Sea Lion' was cancelled.



You could say that these young soldiers were determined keep their country safe and secure.



Ron enjoyed his life in the Para's and would talk about his experiences from time to time. He enjoyed being in the air.

Following war's end, Ron settled down to a job in Orpington selling windows.

Eventually he became a Director of this company, in the meantime we will thumb through his life's photo album.



If you walk away from this, it is a good landing



Ready to jump again...!

In 1959 Ron went to Croydon Aerodrome and started flying in a



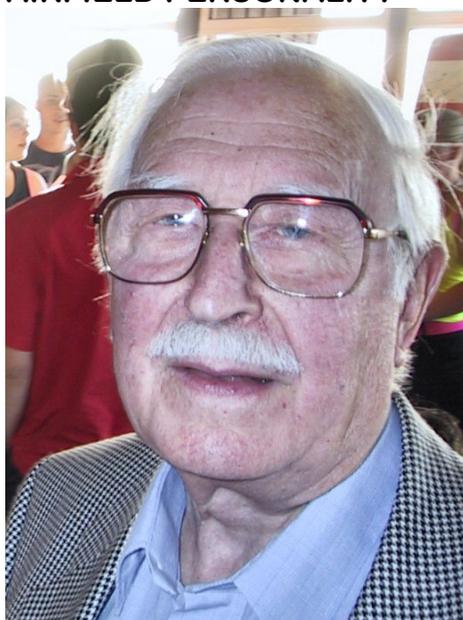
DH Chipmunk, with 600 Squadron.

With the closure of Croydon all the flying clubs moved to Biggin Hill where Ron continued flying for many years.



Ron, pictured above in a TB10 Tobago, was also an **Airfield Personality...!**

AIRFIELD PERSONALITY



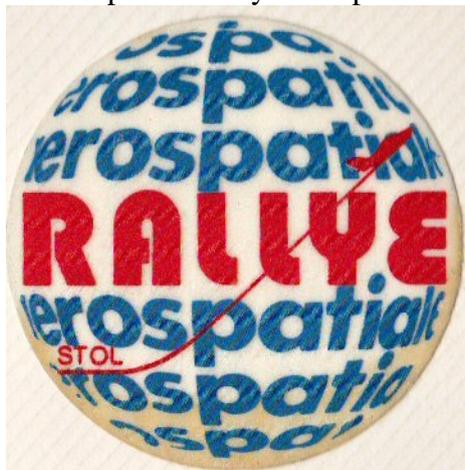
FRED BENNETT

Sadly passed away, on the 14th April 2012, at the grand age of 93.

Fred was one of the original Air Touring Club Founders at Biggin Hill. Initially occupying the old control tower building



They would move to the other side of the airfield to a new brick built structure with a hangar in the late 60's. Around this period they became agents for the Rallye aircraft produced by Aerospatiale.



This would be a successful relationship for many years to come, selling aircraft and having up to 12 aircraft available for club use which helped to reduce flying training costs.

The hangar originally designed to house aircraft became a full maintenance facility.



The colour schemes were designed by the editor (who was the CFI) at this time.



The picture above was from a very wet Farnborough Air Show with the yellow clad ground crew posing for a colorful scene.



The 'Diplomat' was another product of Aerospatiale which had retractable undercarriage, variable pitch propeller.

This was followed by the TB range of aircraft TB9, TB10, and TB20.



This aircraft had exceptional endurance and range with a wide comfortable cabin.

Fred was always smartly dressed no matter what the time of day, or the weather.

He owned a garage in Cheam for many years repairing and selling cars and hardly a day went by without visiting the airfield and his interest in Air Touring Services.

Fred was also a bit of a War Hero and was part of a large raid on the submarine pens at St Nazaire towards the end of the war.

Fred was a very astute friendly person at all times, his calm manner will be missed.

MAITLAND REMEMBERED



A large crowd gathered at the RAF Chapel on the 25th April 2012 for a



final tribute to the memory of Jock, for his contribution to aviation, and the many Air Shows he organised during 48 years.



2005 Air Show, Jock is presented with a trophy from Sqdr Ldr Andy Offer OBE, and Ray Hannah former leader of the Red Arrows.



Exciting pictures of the Red Arrows from the editor's archive.



Thousands upon thousands would make the annual pilgrimage to be part of these wonderful shows. Sadly many of these people left the 2010 Air Show wondering which way to go, as do the Red Arrows,



appearing to depart also in different directions.....!!
Following the Chapel Service there

followed a wonderful reception at the old Air Touring hangar where memories of Jock's life and his many air shows throughout the UK



The early air show days when attendees could get close up to the aircraft that were produced to defend the United Kingdom. Britain produced some of the most advanced aircraft including this Vulcan bomber, some of which bombed the Falkland Islands in a non-stop flight from the Ascension Islands some 20 years after this picture was taken at Biggin Hill.

A brief profile of Jock's aviation achievements in pictures displayed



It was estimated there were some 270 people packed into the Chapel

On entry the editor and colleagues were destined to standing only when the Reverend Chris Baker guide them to some seats adjacent to the altar where the choir normally sit and informed us that we were expected to sing loudly..!



Above: Janet Hoare former ATC at Biggin Hill, Simon Aimes, Air Show Director and Sally Aimes.



Brendan O'Brien having taken a big bite of his sandwich, still manages to enthrall Will Curtiss and Nigel Lamb with his questions and flying stories bedecked with three layers of flying jackets as



Daniel Griffith prepares for a final flying display in tribute to Jock.



JOHN RAMSAY MAITLAND MBE, 1924 - 2012

By Dale Donovan

“Aviation is proof that, given the will, we have the capacity to achieve the impossible”

(Eddie Rickenbacker, much decorated US World War One fighter pilot.)

A defining moment in Jock Maitland's commitment to a lifetime in aviation was a visit by Alan Cobham's legendary Flying Circus to a field near his Forfar home town in the 1930s. The displays given by Cobham's fleet of civilian aircraft made Jock determined to fly, and most likely sowed the seeds leading him to eventually become an innovating pioneer in the European air display industry.

Jock was born John Ramsay Maitland in Dumbartonshire on October 11, 1924, the third of four children, moving to Burnside, the family home at Forfar, when he was three years old.

As a boy, Jock professed to have been “nuts about aeroplanes” and went to see them at the Fleet Air Arm Station at Arbroath as often as he could. He had wanted to join the Royal Air Force but there was family reluctance, so he joined the Fleet Air Arm instead. After a year, however, the Navy decided they did not need more pilots so Jock, who had begun flight training in Canada, eventually did join the RAF in November 1943.

He was required to repeat his flying training, this time in South Africa, but the war ended before he could see action. He obtained a release from the RAF and worked as a lumberjack for his father, until the RAF decided it needed to train new pilots rather than keep surplus wartime aircrew. Therefore Jock was recalled to the RAF in September 1946 and embarked on his third bout of flying training, this time in England, and finally completed the course and was awarded his pilot's “Wings”.

Thus began a distinguished 12-year career with the RAF, much of which was spent in the Middle East, with a spell in South Korea, seconded to the United States Air Force.

August 1947 saw Jock flying Spitfires with 32 Squadron in support of the United Nations' Mandate on Palestine engaging in some very active peace-keeping duties between the Egyptians and Israelis, an undertaking complicated by the fact that all three armed forces were flying Spitfires.

He converted to jet fighters on his return to the UK, and in due course was seconded to the US Air Force during the Korean War. He flew Sabre jets till October 1953 as a Flight Commander with the 25th Fighter Interceptor Squadron by which time he had shot down two Communist MiGs. This earned him the American Distinguished Flying Cross and the American Air Medal.

The Suez Crisis saw Jock return to the Middle East in 1956 to take command of 249 Squadron flying Venom fighter-bombers in Jordan. On the way there, flying his own Proctor aircraft, he was arrested and interrogated as a spy after he landed unannounced at Abu Sueir airfield in Egypt where, to his astonishment, newly delivered MiG-15s of the Egyptian Air Force were lined up. He was released three days later following intervention by the British Embassy.

His squadron was heavily engaged in operations from Jordan and Cyprus, till Jock was posted to Libya in November 1957 as Officer Commanding Flying Wing at El Adem. By this time he was becoming disillusioned with the RAF, and he resigned from the service in June 1958. Following his departure from the RAF he found himself at Croydon airport as a flying club instructor. But after a year the civilian lease for Biggin Hill Airfield became available after the RAF ceased flying there, and after some deft manoeuvring he took it up.

Jock was soon embarking on a number of ventures at Biggin – an air taxi service, a camper-van hire enterprise, an aircraft import and flying school business, and, with his business partner Ted Drewery, a charter and inclusive tour airline.

But he nurtured an ambition to introduce air travel to the masses, and sought to do this by making airliners and air travel accessible to the public. With Ted Drewery, Jock staged the first Biggin Hill Air Travel Fair in May 1963. This enterprise was hugely successful, and laid the foundation of what was to evolve into the iconic Biggin Hill Air Fair.

Much has been enjoyed, and written, about Jock's Air Fairs over the years. Each one had his unique influence on them, whether it was exotic formations, like Concorde with Spitfires in 1986, and Harrier with Sopwith Pup in 1988, or

unique and fascinating aircraft not seen elsewhere, such as a Short Sunderland in 1990, and Avro Lancaster which arrived unexpectedly from Australia in 1968.

And in later years each Air Fair had its own specific theme: the 2010 event, for example, marked the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, in which Biggin Hill played such a pivotal role, and included Spitfires and Hurricanes in the flying display, one each of which had actually fought in the Battle.

The Air Fair became a sought after venue for international display pilots and aerobatic teams, attracting the finest civilian and military fliers. Aerobatic teams came from most European countries over the years, and with the collapse of the Soviet Union, a much more open Russia and its former Warsaw Pact allies brought a whole new element to Western European air shows. This was Jock's theme for the 1995 Air Fair, “East meets West”, marking the 50th anniversary of VE Day, and giving thanks that the Cold War never warmed up.

The Air Fairs have supported various local charities over the years, and for those who wanted a bit more than aviation, there were funfairs, a host of ground displays, vintage car gatherings and impressive parades of military vehicles.

Jock's company, Air Displays International, and its predecessors, staged more than 100 air shows throughout the UK between 1963 and 2010 including 48 Air Fairs, six Battle of Britain shows, and hosted dozens of celebrities from test pilots, entertainers, politicians, and industrialists to local dignitaries and Royalty. For services to aviation Jock was awarded the Air League's Jeffrey Quill Medal by the Duke of Edinburgh in 2003, invested with the MBE in 2007 and had “Maitland View”, a new roadway at Biggin Hill airfield, named after him at a ceremony in 2009.

The final Biggin Hill Air Fair was in 2010 when Jock was 85, and this was the last of what had been one of the most successful British Civilian air display enterprises ever. Jock's air shows were professional and entertaining events, imbued with a relaxed, family atmosphere. Both they and Jock will be sorely missed.

“To most people, the sky is the limit. To those who love aviation, the sky is home.”

(Anon)