



# BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005



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## ANNUAL S & A BARBECUE

A magnificent turn out, the weather was fine and the Chef, Tony Habgood of Shipping & Airlines, remained steadfastly at his post despite the seething heat.



This successful event was attended by 60 / 70 pilots and friends with a small raffle being held in aid of Louis-Wilmot Johnson, a little boy (within the Greenyer family) who has just turned seven and is suffering from Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. £280 was raised. Peter and Mrs G, wish to thank everyone for their support. This money is being put forward for a trip to Disney Land whilst Louis is able to travel. We wish him well.

### The Raffle Victors – John Willis



displays his prize of a super bottle of French white wine, although the

wooden case was far more expensive complete with corkscrew and other tools associated with a wine bottle. **Steve Speed below:**



posing casually with his prize – not the aircraft, he only won a flight in this Piper Cub..... Aagh!!

However the Bugle feels that the result was rigged. (Get it?) (Rigging – rigged) Somebody just said rigging was to do with yachts. So, where is the editors ‘*sailing experience*’ prize. (Sorry, it sank during the last sailing experience.)

### 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 1959 EGCR

This famous location indicator was removed from the register on this date 50 years hence. A flypast over this famous airfield took place on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2009.



This fly past is posted on YouTube with the unique throbbing sound from the inline engines which powered many of the aircraft.



### A graceful airliner at Croydon

The DH 91 Albatross constructed from wood was designed as a mail plane in 1936, and finally flew in May 1937. A couple were converted to passenger aircraft carrying 22 passengers with a speed of 193kts. Seven of these aircraft were built between 1938 and 1939. However WWII intervened, and they were pressed into service with the RAF, whereupon two subsequently crashed landed in Reykjavik, reducing their numbers. Another was destroyed in an air raid at Bristol in 1942. The aircraft had four power plants each made up by



combining two Gypsy six inline engines which must have sounded really great in flight. Each 12 cylinder power unit developed 525HP. The engine being quite unique for this period of the halcyon days of aviation, and they



fitted neatly into cylindrical cowlings. A supercharger helped maintain power at altitude and it ran on 87 octane fuel.

Some good news regarding **EGCR**, the old location indicator for Croydon. It has been re-allocated to a grass airfield called Ashcroft Airfield which has a 650M strip and is situated at the Southern end of the Manchester Low Level Route. There is a club house and maintenance facility and a good pub just two clicks down the road. However this airfield is only open to pilots with good grass field experience. **PPR tel:07977 065780**  
< [ashcroftair@btinternet.com](mailto:ashcroftair@btinternet.com) >

**EFFECTIVE CAMOUFLAGE** is a form of deception on a grand scale as many of us old soldiers understand, but once your cover is blown, it then becomes less effective. The following story is a classic example of maintaining a huge deception during WWII



This is a picture of the huge Lockheed aircraft factory in 1940 at Burbank California that became

a worrying factor because of a possible bombing raid from the Japanese, who had bases in the Aleutian Islands, which was only 2100nm away. With the assistance of the Army Corps of Engineers they camouflaged the whole area with netting and other devices into very effective rural sub divisions.



Study this picture to see the vast difference in appearance of the aircraft factory. Below is another



view from ground level, giving the appearance of sloping ground.



Some natural skillful camouflage.



Even the editor tries his skills at blending in with his immediate

surroundings. He is brilliant at camouflaging 'his round' money..!

### HOW TO AVOID SWINE FLU

It is probably a good idea not to go around kissing pigs, and small children. Apparently this doesn't affect small children, but it is a good excuse for some time off school, or a couple of days off work, if you have recently



witnessed a rural scene such as this in the last few days, you can almost claim to have become infected...!! Anyone for a bacon sandwich ?

### NZ AVIATION PIONEER ??

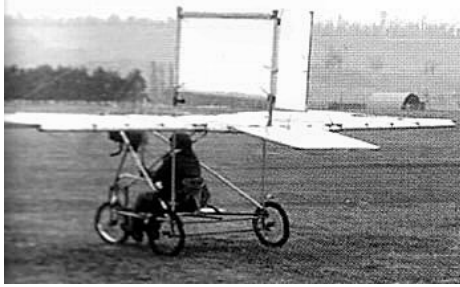
Did he beat the Wright Brothers, is the question. The Bugle can reveal this early pioneer Richard Pearse (1877-1953) at the age of 26 classified as an inventor and aviator in that order.



He went on to patent his invention with an ingenious new style bicycle construction using steel tubing and bamboo, wire and canvas. Flying was his dream, not cycling. He also built a two cylinder petrol engine in 1902 for this machine. After several taxiing runs in his paddocks in 1903 he took off from the nearby Waitohi Road, and after

50 yards of public flight he crashed into his own gorse hedge.

Hardly surprising he didn't get very far as it looks very precarious.



However a stamp was produced to mark his achievement, although he admitted that he never solved the problem of aerial navigation and did not beat the Wright Brothers.



This was very considerate of him, to admit his failure. It is hard to imagine all this happened 107 years ago with these few pioneers. Now there are thousands employed in aviation and associated services.

### **I.O.W. MID AIR COLLISION**

This story happened nearly 40 years ago, as recounted by one of the participants....

The Bembridge Air Race was always a highlight in the sporting calendar of the sixties and seventies, and the 1972 event was no exception. Practice in the morning of race day went without a hitch and our handicap in the RF5 G-AYBS gave me hope for a good result. The RF4 G-AWGO, my old personal aircraft, now owned by friend and club member Richard, was not so well favoured.

The approach to the turning point at the top of the Needles, the cliffs at the Western end of the Isle of Wight is made across the water, so getting out of the ground (water) effect requires a climb of some three hundred feet. As we approached the cliffs it had become

apparent the wind had increased since the morning and we encountered considerable turbulence just before the turning point. I spotted Richard in Golf Oscar approaching the pylon at our altitude but from a much wider angle. I'll get you on this one Richard, you're running very wide, I think, as we bank into the turn.

Then there is a violent thump from under the aircraft and the next thing I recall is the vision of the white cliffs in front of us. Johnny, my co-pilot in the rear seat, recognised the situation as soon, or sooner, than me and shouted "She's spinning" instinctively I applied the correction and Bravo Sierra responded immediately. Just as well, the water was very close and, luckily we were pointing away from the cliffs. The broken stub of the propeller left no doubt as to the next event! Leave the undercarriage retracted, angle so as not to meet a wave head on and get the speed right back. Splash. Silence. "You OK, I ask Johnny?" I don't remember his reply or even if I asked him but the relief of just being alive after such an experience needed something to confirm it!

We were both sure that it was Richard with whom we had collided and there was no sign of him or Golf Oscar. We were only a couple of hundred yards from the Needles and he had to be pretty close. Meanwhile we were sitting on the seat backs with the canopy open and not even our feet got wet. Bravo Sierra was apparently undamaged, except the prop, of course, and floating well. In a matter of minutes an RAF helicopter was hovering above but managed to signal that we were OK and please would they go after Richard. I think the turn point marshals were in contact and could see Golf Oscar in the sea at the foot of the cliff and we were to learn later that the pilot did an excellent job in getting the injured but alive Richard to the hospital in a matter of minutes.

Meanwhile we broke open a pack of sandwiches and soft drinks and watched the race from a rather unusual viewpoint. The helicopter returned and lifted us to safety. Our first question was about Richard and it was such a relief to know that he had survived. A truly miraculous escape. Our propeller had severed the engine from the fuselage and Richard descended strapped in his seat with nothing in front of him. Broken legs and some cuts but nothing life threatening.

Of course, the whole incident was analysed and eye witness accounts recorded. As both aircraft were insured by the same underwriters the allocation of blame was a matter of only personal interest. I admit to causing the accident by turning inside Richard, albeit outside the turn pylon, Richard admits that wearing a peaked baseball cap prevented him from seeing my aircraft. Paint marks on the recovered aircraft showed that the point of contact was under Bravo Sierra's starboard wing, which was also slightly damaged, and it was certainly Bravo Sierra's propeller that had severed Golf Oscar's engine. A couple of feet aft and it would have been Richard's head. Sobering thought. Some months later when Richard was recovered we had a celebration party at RAF Thorney Island. The aircrew laid on a great evening and much beer was consumed. The helicopter pilot also admitted in an off guard moment that he had deliberately dunked me in the ocean. "People I rescue have to be wet" he retorted when I reminded him that I was perfectly dry until I was suspended beneath his helicopter.

### **BAD DAY AT THE OFFICE**

Due to a couple of unforeseen circumstances in the last few days of this month, a couple of good articles have had to be put on hold and will appear in a future issue, all being well – well being the operative word!

If you find yourself having a few problems sometime, just think of this picture - Now we think this really sums up a bad day – but at least her hair will be OK when the rescue services arrive on scene.....!



**NOW THIS IS HOW A BAD HAIR DAY LOOKS**