



# BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

*News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005*



CLUB AND AIRPORT NEWS  
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BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB LTD  
[www.bigginhillclub.co.uk](http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk)

In Ass. with BigginHillReunited.co.uk  
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## THE COMANCHE CLUB

A flight with Peter Greenyer and Graham Balls in a twin engine PA39 Piper G-LARE from Biggin Hill to St Johns, in Newfoundland. A journey of some 2954.10nm with approximately 1800nm over the inhospitable waters of the North Atlantic Ocean. *(and return)*

### Sunday 12 July - Leg One - Biggin to Wick

We left Biggin at 0905z after mag drop that cleared on its own when we taxied back so no real delay. After departure we were cleared to FL100 across London and then found ourselves released and in the open FIR so took radar all the way up the east coast - just like the old days! The aircraft was quite heavy so we hand flew to save electric trim system. Our HF aerial makes odd droning noise when you fly through any moist air. The weather was excellent and arrived Wick at 1235z using vectors to a visual for Runway 31.

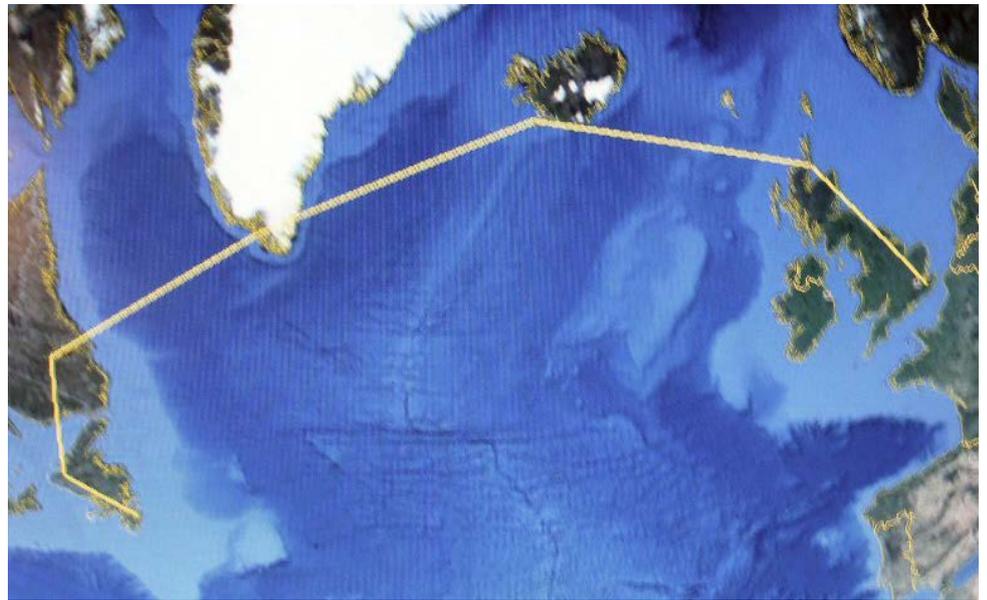
### ARRIVING AT WICK



### Sunday 12 July - Leg Two – Wick to Reykjavik

Andrew Bruce at Wick was very helpful and was keen to sell us anything he could from aviation oil

After fuelling up, donning the much-dreaded survival suits and generally sorting the aircraft we



bulk delivered to Biggin Hill

*Andrew Bruce: squeezing the*



*last few pennies from Peter's pig skin wallet, without any remorse!*

took off from Wick climbing to FL100 which was very easy.



We maintained good two way VHF with Scottish and Icelandic radio all the way.

Landing at 1705z on Runway 31 at Reykjavik after flying along the most spectacular scenery off the south coast of Iceland.

We decided then that we could



Another competitor at Wick.

Some time here on our return journey. Fuelled up, aeroplane re-organised for tomorrow and then it was downtown Reykjavik to the hotel where we had dinner with four Comanche crews that were enroute – It was a nice hotel but for some reason was full of Korean visitors - very odd considering how remote we were here in Iceland!!

Reflection on today's flying from Biggin Hill to Wick and Reykjavik 1081.10nm 7.12hrs G/S 151.83

Monday 13 July - First Leg – Reykjavik to Narsarsuaq



Peter Greenyer arrives at the most friendly FBO centre in the world (BIRK) Reykjavik. World time clocks displaying times around the world.

We took off from Reykjavik at 0945z and climbed under Iceland control to FL100 as planned. The VHF was ok but was soon broken and difficult to hear. About 1hr 30mins into the flight we encountered icing that built up slowly but steadily so we needed to

*Climbing out of Reykjavik.....*



take action. We asked for a lower level but were refused due traffic - so announced we would descend to FL55 and continue IFR outside controlled airspace. The ice build up also affected the HF aerial very badly and we decided that it was not safe to keep it on the aeroplane for the return journey.

We used the HF for weather reports successfully but were unable to raise any of the Iceland radio or Gander radio frequencies as requested in clearance. On the other hand the Sat Phone was a great success and we were able to send and receive messages both position and general calls without any difficulty and with great sound quality and definition. 200nm out from Narsarsuaq we climbed up into clear weather to FL130



to cross the southern section of the ice cap and made use of the oxygen for the first time which all worked fine. The weather at Narsarsuaq was given as clear below FL100 and we used the procedure to the NDB approach to Runway 07. Very interestingly we descended in the hold from FL130 and became visual at FL90 but followed the procedure to land at 1400z, good practice should we need to do this for real, on the way back!



The high ground of Greenland approaching descent (10,000ft) for Narsarsuaq.



Peter Greenyer calling on his 'Sat'Phone before departing on the days second leg, for Goose Bay.

*How many times has this dramatic view been captured at Narsarsuaq.*

**Monday 13th July - Second Leg – Narsarsuaq to Goose**

We fuelled up at BGBW and contacted Canadian customs beforehand with an update of our ETA. We eventually departed BGBW at 1400z climbing to FL100 on track HOIST - the Canadian border entry point. Weather was good and we kept in contact by using the 'Sat Phone' as required. The trip to Goose Bay was uneventful in good weather landing at Goose Bay at 1700z



We refuelled with all the other Comanches and then departed for the (1) North Hotel



and dinner in, 'Jungle Jims' restaurant. We met a Native Indian Crusader at the bar!



The food was junk but the beer was good.

*The Comanche Club put on a brave face, despite the local eating habits*

### Tuesday 14th July - First Leg – Goose to Deer Lake

We departed Goose at 1300z for Deer Lake and decided to see some of the country on the way to St. John's – We flew VFR in OK weather that was improving all the time as we flew South East – It is a very barren country with no real features except the odd river - just miles of trees and poor ground.



*A reflective approach to Deer Lake*

We Landed at Deer Lake at 1545z .After refuelling we took a taxi into town for a short sight-seeing trip - very pretty and weather now

CAVOK and warm – We had lunch in town and back to airport by cab with a tour included.



The population of Deer Lake was 4995 in 2011, with few additions.,we imagine with plenty of space for parking and visibility is unlimited. Just clean well washed air without any polluted particals remaining. (unlike the UK).

### Tuesday 14th July - Second Leg – Deer Lake to St. John's

We departed Deer Lake at 1730z for St. John's but decided to route via Fugu Island and the East Coast to see more of the coastline, as the weather was so fine. We travelled in company with N429NA for a while but we were not comfortable with his unplanned formation flying so broke it off! We landed in St. John's at 1930z using the LPV approach to Runway 25 with a displaced threshold as work was in progress. During refuelling we noticed that our calulations for fuel



*Graham and Peter at St Johns*



consumed versus planned did not tally for the first time - We will need to take great care to check this again on the return flight to Goose. We were treated very well by the girls in the FBO including a welcome beer and two cooked lobsters for our evening meal - all gratis. We arrived at hotel for dinner at 2030 hrs and enjoyed a real relaxing evening without lobsters which stayed that night in the 'captains fridge' at Goose Bay.



### Wednesday 15th July

Woke up to heavy persistent rain low **cloud / fog** which caused flight delays and cancellations, even for the big boys.



Good job we arrived the day before!! We took a tour in a taxi around town and learnt that this fog is a local phenomena associated with the whales chasing Capelin shoals onto the beach where they are collected by the locals for food.



After our short tour concluded we looked around some museums of local life and history. Then back in hotel for a late lunch of cold white wine and our lobsters, which were



Fantastic! We followed the crab with some very nice red wine and a cheese board that was not something the hotel had come across before ah..! Out to a very good local restaurant for dinner then on to a pool club until very late – a good evening!!



with great views of the St. John's harbour, when the fog cleared! – We finished the night with a good dinner in town and a few more beers at the pool hall in town.



**Friday 17th July**



Marconi signal station - at hearts content cove - great location where we saw the site where the cables came ashore from Ireland and were amplified before being sent on to New York - very interesting.

Lunch in diner which was OK and then on to Visit Grace Field and the Amelia Earhart statue - this site was the location of many trans Atlantic attempts and quite a few where not successful.



*Statue of Amelia Earhart stands ahead of the DC3 and spectators on this historical Grace Field.*

On return we had dinner at Yellow Bellies in town - which was quite good and afterwards out for a few beers before retiring for the night.

**Saturday 18th July**

AM at airfield to fettle aeroplane. Captain Balls did a great job with help from Wolfgang on rear fairing and loose bolts in left engine nacelle. We also removed the HF aerial that had caused so much concern and stored it for the return trip to the UK.

PM, we visit David Buttle's house



**Thursday 16th July**

Long coach ride to Cape Spear to see the lighthouse and harbour defences that protected the convoy start point in WW2. As an extra bonus we saw whales blowing - they are visiting this coast chasing the Caplin which they feed on. The result is that large numbers of these fish get stranded on the beach are a traditional delicacy for the locals.



Lunch at a good restaurant in Quidi Vidi Cove which was excellent - I had Bubble and Squeak -first class. Then on to Signal Hill to see the site where Marconi received the first WT transmission from Ireland



Plaque to Amelia Earhart.

This field was interesting with regard to those early pioneers who braved the elements and making aviation history as they went.



for a BBQ and a pool tournament. A great day - fabulous house with breathtaking views out to sea.



And a BBQ beyond belief served on the balcony.



There is so much space in this part of the world,

We ended up having a small pool tournament in the evening.

The size of houses here make a pool table look small, great facility to have in the basement which most houses are built on here.

### **Sunday 19th July – Leg one St Johns to Goose**

We departed St. John's IFR for Goose Bay at 1400z in company with two other Comanches ...

*Passing (CYQX) Gander.*



Robert Limb in N7EY and Trevor Laundry in D-GEPZ . We routed via Gander climbing to FL 090. The weather was fair but we

encountered some light icing along the way that saw us descend to FL060. We landed at Goose at 1700z in good visual conditions and after refuelling we all met up once gain for a meal at Jungle Jims - same deal as before - good beer and average food!

451.31nm 3hrs G/S 150.43



*This Vulcan suffered a serious taxiing accident whilst operating at Goose and was deemed as too expensive to repair it was donated to the Canadians by the RAF as a gate guardian for Goose Bay.*

### **Monday 20th July - Leg One - Goose Bay to Narsarsuaq**

After some serious weather discussions on BGBW's likely weather we decided to launch IFR and departed Goose at 1030z for Narsarsuaq. The routing was exactly the reverse of our inbound plan climbing to FL090 and as expected we lost two way VHF at 100 miles out or so - we were given HF freqs to call by Gander control - but of course this was not much use as we no longer had an aerial attached!! However the Sat Phone once again proved the ideal solution and we retained two-way with Gander all the way using this wonder weapon.

The weather was good enroute and improved at BGBW so much that we could see the icecap at over 50 miles and eventually landed entirely visual with great views of the fjords as we descended. There was a little consternation as the Gander Control guy warned us about cables across the fjords as a potential hazard that we needed to get a briefing on before proceeding visual - however when we spoke with the info man at BGBW they

were at 900 ft max and were no hazard. We landed at BGBW at 1500z for a quick refuel and pitot drain - no customs or formalities, just pay the bill and we were on our way after checking the aircraft and draining fuel.

676.36nm G/S 150.30 kts 4.5hrs.

### **Monday 20th July - Leg Two – Narsarsuaq to Reykjavik**

We left Narsarsuaq for Reykjavik at 1600z departing IFR and climbing FL130 to get over the ice pack. We carefully checked that the oxygen was working as this was the highest part of the flights we planned. We took some pictures of the scenery as the weather was good and the winds were light and helpful at this stage - they were however forecast to change dramatically.

After we passed the ice pack we descended to FL090 as per our plan and lost contact with Gander on VHF. Other aircraft were calling on the air-to-air frequency reporting no joy on any HF comms they had been allocated so we felt good about having the Sat Phone capability and used this to report all the way to 100 miles or so to Iceland. The weather was reasonable but an occlusion was forecast near Iceland and we did pick up some light icing but decided to stay at FL090 as the lower levels looked worse! The wind picked up as forecast and at one time we were down to a ground speed of 110kts but we managed to route south around the worse of the weather and arrived in Iceland in good VFR to land their Runway 19.

A strange thing happened as we approach over Keflavik to land - they launched a Boeing 727 straight at us - it was all under control but it was very odd to roll the wing down at 5000ft and see this machine coming straight at you like a rocket. As we landed late (2230z) we did not refuel, a

mistake that we made for the first time on the trip and a decision that would come back to haunt us later. Made it to the hotel in time for a few beers and some cards!  
670.13nm G/S 148,91 4.50hrs.

## Tuesday 21 July

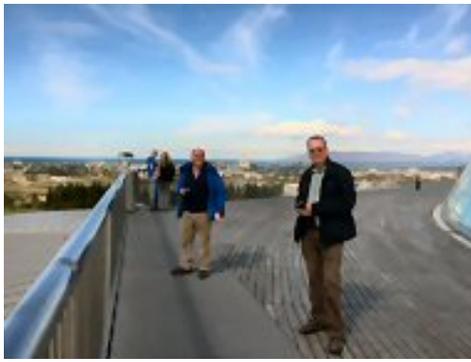
*Hot springs and geysers*



The weather was dry and clear so spent the day exploring Reykjavik town with a bus tour and a great social lunch which lasted several hours - a great town with lots of interest for the tourist - just enough time to get back to hotel to change



for dinner which was at a local tapas restaurant recommended to us by Torquil Clyde from a previous visit. An excellent meal of local food which was of the very highest quality - great company with the Comanche team - back to hotel for beers and more cards!



*On top of the Perlan centre:*



*Reykjavik airfield from the Perlan:*



*Refuelling at Keflavik*



When we returned to Reykjavik we found there was no Avgas 100 LL

which meant we had to fly the 19nm to Keflavik to upload fuel.

We also flew to Vestmannaeyjar a former volcanic island.



## Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July

Tour of island organised for today with the Comanche team - we visited geothermal water generation, volcanoes and geysers and saw dramatic scenery with spectacular waterfalls. After lunch visited the 'Golden Lagoon' where hot spring waters naturally produce a bath that was enjoyed by some of the team - I preferred to keep my clothes on and enjoyed another beer instead. Made it back to hotel just in time for happy hour, followed by dinner down town with another late night due to beer and cards which was a lot of fun.



*The Icelandic scenery is vivid and dramatic. Summers are long and the Winters short.*



## Thursday 23 July

Airport day - late launch due to late night previous - visited airports to get G-LARE organised for the trip home on Friday - this included giving her a good external check, refuelling, oils and stowing items used on last trips. Lucky we did as we discovered that Reykjavik was out of avgas - not something we needed to discover when trying to leave on Friday! We explained to the FBO staff that part of our plan was to get some local flying done today as the weather was perfect and the FBO guy said it would be several hours before they could get a tanker in and have the fuel checked and ready. Unfortunately we did not have enough fuel for an extended local with good reserves and so reluctantly had to bin our plans - if only we had refuelled on landing as we did everywhere else - another lesson learned.

A bit disappointed we decided to join the others for a visit to The Pearl which is the plant which cures the hot water sent from the geothermal units out in the countryside and which acts as supplier of hot water to the whole of Reykjavik. This involved climbing a hill overlooking the airfield and from this lofty perch we could see all the aircraft coming and going including all our machines sitting at the pumps going nowhere.

The Pearl was a very worthwhile visit with a great viewing platform and a really nice tea shop where we enjoyed a great lunch of salad and soft drinks - it must have been the lack of alcohol because we came up with a cunning plan which could yet see us airborne.

We left our friends at The Pearl and went back to the airport and asked the FBO guy to double check that there was indeed avgas at Keflavik - just 20 miles away - this he did and after a careful pre-flight

we filed VFR for BIKF and departing on r/w 35 at Reykjavik we landed just 15 mins later at Keflavik on the r/w 02. We were directed to South Air the FBO - and they were most efficient such that we were refuelled and airborne again with 20mins.

We filed again VFR and were Airborne again from BIKF off r/w 02 - we routed along the coast to the island of Vestmannaeyjar and landed in fine weather on their r/w 12 for a very brief visit to what looks like a very beautiful island - a quick coffee and we were airborne again for Reykjavik where we landed at 1750z - just in time to grab a cab and be only a few minutes late for our restaurant date in town. Enjoyed a good fish meal with limited alcohol and we were all in bed by 1030 that evening.

## Friday 25th July - leg one

We were up early and out to the FBO by 0745 - we fettled G-LARE and prepared ourselves for our departure. We were airborne at 0900z on an IFR plan to Wick - the weather was fair and we were able



to maintain FL090 in between layers with only minimal ice being accumulated. As usual we lost VHF about 200 nm out from Reykjavik and used the sat phone to pass position reports to Iceland radio. The weather gradually deteriorated during the leg until we were above a solid layer with plenty of moisture present - however FL090 worked really well. Finally we made contact with Scottish and were cleared to the

VOR/DME procedure for the runway 31 at Wick. We flew the procedure without a problem and landed EGPC at 1310z.

639.79nm G/S153.79 4.10hrs

## Friday 25th July - leg two -

We departed Wick at 1400z on an IFR plan for EGKB climbing to FL090 routing down the east coast of the UK in good weather. It was good to be flying over the UK again and we enjoyed our sandwiches and the freedom of not wearing survival gear for the first time. We left controlled airspace just south of the wash and continued IFR outside routing via Lakenheath and Southend.

The weather started to go really downhill at this stage.



*Fortunately we were able to revert modern day navigation technology ( illustration only )*

Whilst carefully monitoring Biggin ATIS to ensure we could continue. We decided it was OK for the 21 ILS despite the wind being 070/10

in heavy rain and the base at 400 ft!  
the worst weather we had flown in  
over 6000 miles and 40.00 flying  
hours !!

Fortunately we had our trusty  
Garmin navigation system installed  
in the aircraft guiding us along the  
East Coast of the UK.

We landed at Biggin at 1800z very  
pleased and relieved to be home  
and after putting the aircraft to bed  
we regrouped at the Kings Arms  
for a full debrief with the families  
and fellow aviators - a great and  
memorable trip was over - and the  
aircraft performed far better than  
we could have hoped for.

PJG



**FALCON FLYING SERVICES ANNUAL XMAS GET TOGETHER  
FRIDAY 27<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**

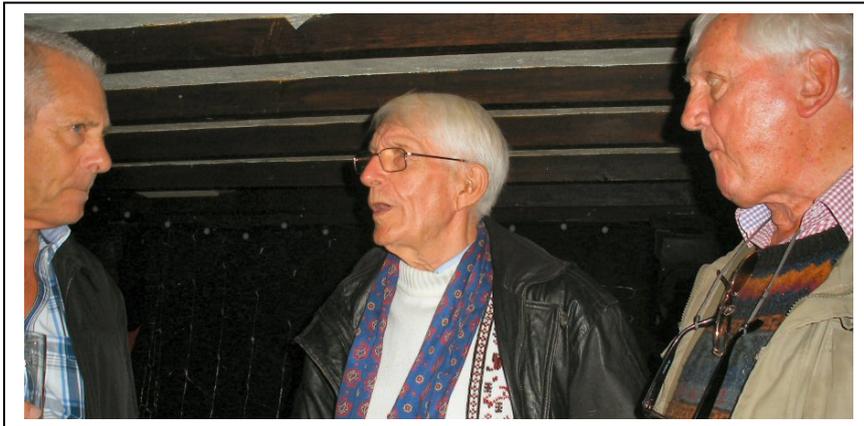
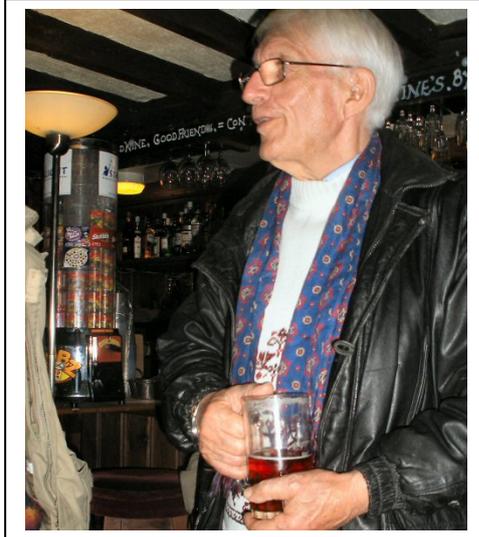
**THE CROWN INN LEAVES GREEN AFTER 6 PM**  
**The menu consists of Caribbean Curry or English Xmas Fare**  
**Prices from £16 to £22**

**We hope you can join us as in the past years**  
**Please advise us today by email or phone**

**Email < SINGHBAM@aol.com > telephone 01959 575923**



**THE KINGS ARMS AND BOB NEEDHAM  
WITH A FEW OF HIS UK FRIENDS  
OF YESTER YEAR  
17<sup>th</sup> October 2015**



A DRINK WITH AN OLD FRIEND. AS WE LOOK AROUND WE ARE GETTING FEWER AS THE YEARS ROLL BY!

CHEERS COBBER