



BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005



CLUB AND AIRPORT NEWS

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AIRPORT HOTEL CONSENT

Hopefully, following many grand proposals over the last 40 years, this new venture may finally take root, providing a long awaited facility offering a quality meeting point for the many pilots, and their passengers that arrive at Biggin Hill from Europe and other far away places, and of course first class accommodation, with flight planning facilities for the pilots on the doorstep. Whilst the Rizonjet



Hangar nears completion adjacent to the two new flying training establishments of Cabair & EFG the commercial entrance is looking quite exhilarating for those interested in learning to fly. Perhaps, a career in aviation! Not forgetting those already initiated in this cultural art of flying, also the many aircraft owners that have supported the airfield over the years, providing a living for others who maintain their aircraft and the equilibrium of the airfield.



Hopefully these private aviators-owners will not be excluded from this proposed venture as they have been the bread and butter for this

airfield for the last 50 years. Whilst many of these gallant airmen have passed on to that airfield in the sky, their efforts in encouraging aviation, whether it was around the bar, or taking someone for a flight, they were the genuine **'gentleman aviators'** not to be forgotten. Without them, all may have been lost years ago. Finally, it is only planning consent that has been granted. We may need to re-polish the old lantern...!



Inciting the mystic powers of the Geni, who may bless this venture



with the first brick being laid. It could also, be a fitting tribute if Sqd. Ldr Jock Maitland were to lay this first brick, following his lifetime legacy to Biggin Hill Airport.

CRITICAL ENGINE FAILURES

Unless you have experienced a crisis such as this, the loss of engine power in flight, or indeed a propeller, which is probably far worse than anything you may ever experience, a simple engine failure after take-off should be a cinch, you have already lost 5 seconds lowering the nose, it will be 10 seconds before you regain the correct gliding speed and now you are confronted with, **WHAT HAPPENED...!!** You are desperate to solve the problem, you have now wasted another 45 seconds, watch the speed, oh! forgot to re-trim, another 25 seconds lost, carb-heat, mixture, change fuel tank, another 15 seconds, oh gawd! fuel pump, forgot the fuel pump, another 10 seconds you are sinking really fast now. Hell the ground has never come up this fast before, full flap, you are still going down, pull back, **pull back - CRUNCH.!** That wasn't too bad, good landing. Nose wheel smashed, aircraft nose stuffed into ground...!! If you care to add up the seconds, you spent a total of 110 seconds descending at 1,000ft per minute which equals 16.6ft per second, total descent loss 1,833ft. Now if you departed from an airfield similar to Biggin Hill which is 600ft a.m.s.l. and your engine failed at 1,000ft, agl can you explain how you made a successful arrival at ground level

with another 233ft still remaining and approximately 14 seconds of flight time still available. It takes less than two minutes to read this article, but it will take far longer to calculate the answer to the puzzle. (Especially as your sink rate realistically, could be a lot more) Engine failure during take-off and climb – *land ahead* – you are committed to an unscheduled landing. This is your **first priority**. Severe engine failures are rare, loss of power is often avoidable. Failure in a twin engine aircraft during take-off and subsequent climb can develop into a real white knuckle ride. If this is the case, close the throttle on the live engine as this will reduce the risk of hitting the ground in a rolling manoeuvre as the result of induced asymmetric thrust. (White knuckle syndrome) It is far better to damage the aircraft by landing wheels up with the wings level rather than try to keep it in pristine condition. (*Pilot owner syndrome*).



“I think you should reduce power on the right engine Captain”.

VH-RJA ACCIDENT REPORT

This full and detailed account arrived on the editor's desk recently.

Report of flying Accident Involving Unidentified Machine & Australian Registered Aviator

VH-RJA Needham.

Time of Accident:

02.00Z 12.00EST

Wx at time of accident:

Wind: Easterly 5 Kts

Cloud: 2 Oktas Cu. Base 5000ft

Vis: Better than 10 Kilometres

Temp: 18C

No precipitation in last 20 years

Note: Weather was not a contributory factor in this accident.

Location of Accident:

31 27 26 22S – 152 43 56 09E

Hastings Street

Wauchope, NSW. Australia 2446



Comments:

On entering the pattern the pilot observed a nondescript white machine on his starboard side at a constant angle (classic 90 deg collision course) which suddenly appeared very large. On realizing that a collision was imminent and unavoidable, the Pilot executed a cunning action plan and turned toward the errant machine, with a graceful pirouette to the right as observers on the ground witnessed. The object was to reduce the impact by a glancing manoeuvre whilst attempting a 180 degree turn back to base. (In this case the pavement.) However as graceful as his aerobatic manoeuvre was, it only resulted in the pilot being struck on the Port side, rather than the Starboard. Whilst engrossed in controlling the spin to the right, he remembered thinking, “So far so good”. Ever the optimist, he started thinking that he may get away with this and regain control. All was working tolerably well up to this point, but his plan hadn't taken into account that his approach speed was exceedingly high, and impact speed would be outside any flight envelope. Any five hour student will tell you that

the penalty for a too fast touch down will result in a big bounce back into the air again.

And so it was, the pilot now found himself running out of airspeed and falling faster to earth. And so it was. He found himself instinctively putting out his right hand and braced his arm to cushion the oncoming impact realising that he would probably break his wrist instead, also if he folded his arm he would smack his head severely on the ground. At this moment in time, he recalled the words of his old flying instructor, Allan Wilson from his old Croydon days, (sitting in the front cockpit of the old Tiger Moth) flashing through his mind. “If you are going to have an accident, keep working at the controls until you come to a stop” As his outstretched hand hit the ground, he deliberately decided to make a wheels up landing and allowed the outstretched arm to fold. Again he thought, as he slithered along the ground, “So far, so good and reckoned he was doing quite well”. It was then, that another bit of advice from Allan's teachings was brought to mind as if he was still in the front seat of the old Tiger Moth (ahead of him). “If you are going to hit something whilst on the ground, don't hit it head on”. “Execute a ground loop and absorb the shock with the wings”. With this sound advice from the past ringing in his ears, he twisted on to his right shoulder, tucking his head into his chest. He came to rest in a cloud of blue smoke, screeching tyres, arms and legs flailing. He found himself lying on the ground with the impacted road flying machine quite stationary just three inches from his legs. As the blue smoke from the tyres dissipated he was able to reach up the front of this unusual flying machine and haul himself to his feet, and thought, “Wow! that was some recovery”. After realising there was no blood and gore or severed limbs to be seen, the usual crowd of post crash

gawkers (*refer to Aussie dictionary – sticky beak - know all – to oggle - goggle – gaze – stare - gape – peer - layabout – drifter*) disappointed at the outcome of this spectacular crash, simply dispersed, showing no further interest, nor assistance.

A kindly soul offered to take the downed pilot home in his own car which was conveniently parked nearby. With no obvious pain, just excitement at having survived a most horrendous, vivid accident, and no doubt in shock, desperate for a cuppa and a bit of a de-brief with his operations manager (wife) he accepted his kind services. On arrival at his home, whilst exiting the car, his leg collapsed. Thought nothing of it, as he had no pain or other symptoms. Following a nice cup of warm tea, his operations manager then decided perhaps he should go to the hospital (hangar) for a check up, just in case. Considering that shock is often a factor in any accident. It proved to be a broken left leg below the knee.

PILOT ASSESSMENT:

This was not an actual aviation accident, but it had similar characteristics. The other flying machine was a white ‘Holden’ car (which was flying down the road). Beware of the 90 degree collision, or any other angle for that matter. If it remains constant within your windscreen vision, you will ultimately have a simultaneous occupation of the same airspace (this can develop into spatial hypnosis until the point of impact), e.g. if you step off the pavement you will experience a very similar accident within a split second with an oncoming ground based flying machine and perhaps, the last few remaining seconds of your life in the air. Always be alert, any ideas of bouncing off the bonnet of a ground associated machine as demonstrated in films by Indiana Jones and James Bond, and other film personalities like Bruce Willis, is not a reality..!



Captain VH-RJA NEEDHAM
Australian Citizen: formerly UK & Kenya and Rhodesia.

ACPL / Instructor / Examiner

Accident Committee Assessment: Pilot had developed an air of complacency (*note expression in image – above*), with regard to machines which fly along the roads, suggested it may be prudent for the pilot to undergo a refresher course of one hour on highway crossing procedures. Pilot’s Operations Manager suggested that now may be a good time to read up on “The Correct Use of Mark 1 Eyeball for Senior Aviators” handbook.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT:

Damage assessment at the time appeared minimal, although pilots pride was a little dented, the engine of the other machine was still ticking over quite nicely considering the apparent severity of this collision. Left undercarriage of VH-RJA (NEEDHAM) was assessed for damage in the (hospital) hangar. It was estimated it would require some time to repair. The undercarriage was found to have suffered a fatigue fracture below the knuckle joint. It will be a few weeks before repairs are completed to VH-RJA. Other road flying machine suffered superficial scratches only, and returned to service immediately, disappearing in the distance in a cloud of dust.

Australian CAA Safety Authority Recommendations:

Aircrew, are reminded once again, that when transiting uncontrolled high density traffic areas “See and be Seen” principals are of the utmost importance, particularly so when vertical separation is not

available and communication facilities are poor or non existent.

CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

Harsh shadows under the Fig Trees adorning the street, **black / white**, now you see him, now you don’t, creating a strobe effect, another inherent hazard during this untimely accident.

SCENES OF TRANQUILITY



14th September 2004, Jack Ryan (Taxi Jack) as he was referred to, enjoys his final beer at the Pilots Pals Bar at Biggin Hill Airfield, almost alone it would appear, prior to his departure the next day for Thailand. Five years on the 15th September 2009 he will be celebrating his fifth year of sheer tranquility on the island of Ko Samui where the temperature is almost constant around 25C to 30C almost everyday and equally void of crowds. Jack of course, is the Bugle’s Far East representative. Cheers Jack! “Happy Retirement Birthday” from all your friends at Biggin Hill. Ko Samui is an ideal place for that far away holiday.



Jack reports the rigours of a tropical life style, is beginning to take its toll – *we don’t believe that!*



SKY WATCH
CIVIL
AIR PATROL

A Registered Charity

A report from: Peter A. Adams
Unit Chief Pilot (UCP), Kent
Flight No.27. Skywatch.

Skywatch is a national charity dedicated to support the emergency services in each county. Its members, both pilots and observers, give their time (when asked and if convenient) to help the emergency services. In fact, Skywatch is the largest civil organization in Europe with some 200 registered pilots. In Kent we have some 20 pilots and observers. We support the Coastguard, Police, Local Authority, St Johns Ambulance, RNLI etc. Recently some of our pilots were in the air supporting the RNLI for the Great North Swim. They make reconnaissance flights for the emergency services and cover such things as "FC000 Alert". Peter has been charged with the job of organizing the Kent Flight. Any pilot with reasonable experience would be welcome to join and a simple contact to his Email address will result in more information about the organization.

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More to be published in next Bugle



AIRFIELD PERSONALITIES



The Charismatic Brendan O'Brien started life at a very early age. "Avec un fort caractère dans le monde de l'aviation" His aviation experiences are exciting for most of us, but somewhat bewildering to those not fully informed.

He is a man for all your aviation needs, day or night, he is able to attend all aviation related functions at a moments notice, a pilots birthday party, an after airshow celebration at the bar. He is able to remain unto the late hours. His travel arrangements are equally simple, he arrives to all events fully clothed, no suitcase, clothing being rotated daily – quite a clever solution to heavy baggage. With his toothbrush in one pocket, a squashed tube of toothpaste in the other. *Les ensemble complet!*



The editor can bear witness to this characteristic during a ferry flight via Dubai, UAE, (where the editor, was instructing at the time) with the late Sqdr Leader Bill Webb during their delivery flight of two DH Herons to Australia. The temperature at Dubai this day was a moderate 46C – Brendan was fully clad. Fortunately the editor's

apartment was air conditioned. Fed and watered they proceeded on their journey to Australia the next morning.

Brendan's ancestry is of Irish descent going as far back as the seventeenth century with Huguenot immigration from France. (The Huguenot period makes interesting reading on the Internet) Although his formative years were spent in London in a quiet family environment, everything changed dramatically when he was orphaned. So began a life of travel and adventure.

As a child he had been fascinated by birds and perhaps flying was in his blood from birth. Not surprising then that the world of aviation beckoned initially with ballooning and gliding before being seduced by powered flight.

Thirty five years later, Brendan has over 13,000 flying hours on nearly 300 types of aircraft and holds a licence to fly most aircraft.

He is also a CAA authorized display pilot / Examiner / Instructor / Test Pilot and Medallist of the Royal Aero Club, holding in excess of two hundred aviation world records ratified by the FAI in Paris. He has flown on every continent in the world, including Antarctica with the British Antarctic Survey Team.



Brendan also trained as a civil and military parachutist and has taken part in several para-military expeditions in the Trans America's and the infamous Darien Gap. He is a keen mountaineer and naturalist with a particular interest in the fauna and flora of the Polar Regions. From the awe inspiring moment of his first loop in a glider, Brendan developed a fascination for aerobatics which was to become one of the strongest motivational forces in his future flying career.

Though never attracted by airline flying, Brendan flew as a single crew commercial pilot for several years in the early days of the UK oil boom in Scotland in such wonderful machines as the multi-engined De Havilland Heron and flew that same type on oil support in the Persian Gulf. It was with another DH aircraft., the Twin Otter, that he had the privilege of experiencing the glories of Antarctica.



He has ferried aircraft, many of them single-engine over all the great oceans of the world.



However it was in airshow flying, in particular the “flying circus” that Brendan was to find his forte, and make his mark.



He formed and led the renowned RF4 Duo aerial ballet, flown to the music of Pink Floyd (*whose members, he had taught to fly*) with his colleague John Taylor. He brought the amazing “Truck Top Landing” to the UK displaying this technique at many airshows. He also led the first team of “Wingwalkers” in Europe and in the process of this flew the



first inverted wingwalk on that continent with Helen Tempest.



Brendan has flown for more than a dozen successful sponsorships and is now working up yet another new and innovative act for the coming airshow season. He is also a highly experienced instructor / examiner on fixed wing and rotary aircraft, Microlights and Gliders and delights in enthusing others to become part of the wonderful world of aviation.

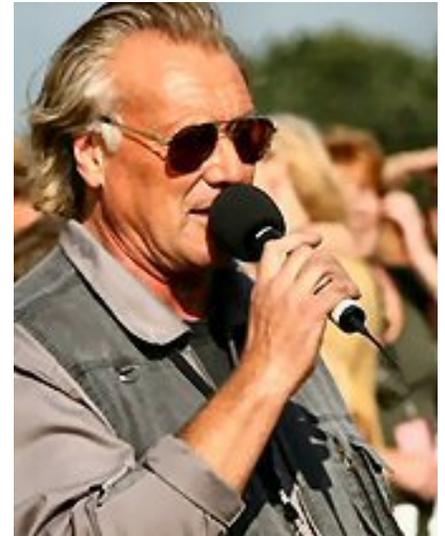
If you are already a flyer, Brendan is able to provide a personal service to guide you anywhere in the world for that long journey you have often dreamt about, thinking it was



beyond your reach. The door is open for your dream trip with vivid scenes such as the vastness of Greenland and its frozen land.

Brendan the commentator, (rent a mouth – a veritable ‘Jimmy Saville’ of the airshows), possesses a verbal repertoire of aviation chat with a bundle of satirical quips to make you chuckle. Brendan is also available to make personal / guest

appearances for advertising campaigns and designer product endorsements.



Brendan’s commentating career started in the early 70’s with the famous Rothman’s Aerobatic Team and has, over the years become much in demand for his presentation vocabulary around the world. He also presented a series for the TV Discovery Channel titled “Flight Line” a brilliant series. Brendan is larger than life a mobile encyclopaedia of aviation stories, some extraordinary tales that are hard to believe, but nevertheless very true. His vocabulary is exquisite adding a rainbow of colour to the enthused visual density of his commentary. Brendan reigns supreme in his larger than life role. His journalistic aviation career has taken him directly to the controls of many varied and exciting flying machines including a flight to the edge of space over Russia in the MIG29 to the dizzy height of 82 Km where the sky turns black and the curvature of the earth is awe inspiring. Surely this must rate as the ultimate pinnacle, of his seemingly never ending colourful book of aviation.

