



BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005



CLUB AND AIRPORT NEWS
ISSUE No. 91

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB LTD
www.bigginhillclub.co.uk

In Ass. with BigginHillReunited.co.uk
1st September 2012

GORDON READER: EX RAF



Gordon was an RAF officer and a very likeable gentleman. As far as we can ascertain Gordon learned to fly in the late 40's with the RAF, eventually flying Harvards and the T33 Lockheed Jet.



In the 50's he transferred to being an Air Traffic Controller. He left the RAF and the UK in the 60's and went to live in New Zealand, working as an ATCO at Palmerston North. (North Island).

Gordon owned 3 old aircraft whilst living in New Zealand.

A special DH60M racing moth ZK-AEJ (modified Gipsy Moth) with thin wings and centre section among other mods.

This aircraft returned to the UK a couple of years ago and took up its original registration G-AAXG.

Unfortunately Gordon never managed to meet up with this aircraft again.

He also had a Moth Minor and a Rearwin Sportster.



Gordon returned to the UK late 70's / early 80's and worked at Shipping and Airlines until the early 90's.



He was always fit and active,

riding his bicycle daily to Biggin Hill Airfield.

May 12th 2005 the Bugle's photographer was taking pictures at Biggin Hill of the Princess Royal cutting the cake for the 40th anniversary of the Red Arrows attendance at the Biggin Hill Air Shows. Gordon was standing extreme right of the picture below:



The following picture (taken at Biggin Hill in 2007) shows Gordon getting the feel of the RAF's latest Turbo-prop Trainer, the Tucano. If only he could get his hands on it.



Sadly Gordon passed away on the 21st August 2012.

His funeral service will be held at the Elmers End Crematorium on the 5th September at 13.30 pm.

All who knew Gordon are welcome to attend the service.

THE SR71 BLACKBIRD:



Wouldn't you just like to have a ride in this beast, let alone have the slightest chance to pole it over the channel to Le Touquet. You would be 200 miles downwind before you had time to catch your breath and transmit your position.

It is awe-inspiring to stand next to this huge flying machine with several cut down 44 gallon drums catching fuel that leaks from within as it stands after cooling down.

During flight this aircraft stretches due to kinetic heating thereby sealing any leaks from the wet fuelling system.

One Soviet Mig Pilot Belinko recalls chasing the SR71 along the Siberian Coast in a Mig25, he said he could not match its speed. One flight in the Mig25 and they had to change both engines. He said, he could not believe such technology existed.

The Blackbird has outrun nearly 4,000 missiles and not once taking a scratch from enemy fire, although it did have some serious mishaps.



Its sheer power and dart like appearance make it one of the fastest aviation missiles ever. There have been some faster experimental aircraft but nothing to

match the consistency of the SR71 for maintaining exceptional high speed in the earth's atmosphere.

They might find that today's high fuel prices may require a little retardation of the throttles, but if the US Government is paying, push the throttles to the firewall.

By the way from your last known position 200 miles downwind at Le Touquet and having caught your breath you look out the window and see you are over Southern Italy.

Fact - from one of the pilots of the SR71: "I was piloting this spy plane the world's fastest jet, accompanied by a Marine Major (Walt) the aircraft's reconnaissance systems officer (RSO).

We had crossed into Libya and were approaching our final turn over the bleak desert landscape, when Walt informed me that he was receiving missile launch signals. I quickly increased our speed, calculating the time it would take for the weapons – most likely SA-2 and SA-4 surface to air missiles capable of Mach 5 – to reach our altitude, I estimated that we could beat the rocket-powered Missile to the turn and stayed our course, betting our lives on the planes performance.

After several agonising seconds we made the turn, and blasted toward the Mediterranean Sea.

'You might want to pull it back' Walt suggested.

It was then that I noticed I still had the throttles fully forward. The plane was flying a mile every 1.6 seconds, well above the Mach 3.2 limit. It was the fastest we would ever fly.

I pulled the throttles to idle just south of Sicily, but still over ran the tanker awaiting us over Gibraltar...."

I think we should give up any ideas of having a go at flying this aircraft around the skies of the UK.

Seems to be just a little scary, with no time to map read or even keep ones flight log up to date.

Not much use for your actual 'breakfast patrol' fly in's.



The Olympic Games came and went and hardly raised a cloud of dust at Biggin Hill.

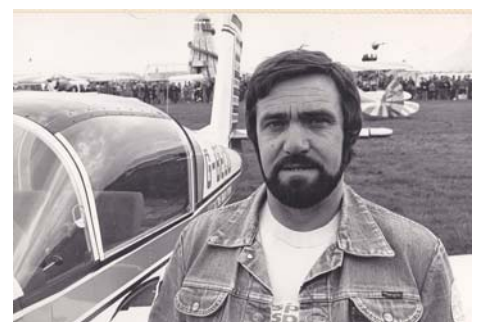
The airfield appeared to be as quiet as ever and when local flying security was relaxed, no one appeared to rush forward to fill the gap.

Having been indoctrinated to restrictions during the games most pilots turned to another form of relaxation, go for a holiday and basically enjoy the restrictions.

We remember the good old days with some of the people that made these days so memorable at Biggin Hill.



Richard, Graham and Bill.



Your editor many moons ago.