



BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005



CLUB AND AIRPORT NEWS

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB LTD

In Ass. with BigginHillReunited.co.uk

Issue 157

www.bigginhillclub.co.uk

1ST February 2018

MALTA, OMAN, UAE. FEB 79



An unexpected trip to Malta Air Rallye in February 1979 would lead to 3 more holidays in Malta doing some Scuba Diving.

RUGGEDNESS OF OMAN



Driving toward Masafi where they bottle the water from a natural spring.

The Humidity of the atmosphere in these Jebels creating some distinctive shades of blues.

Whilst it hadn't rained here for the last seven years, it rained today, quite suddenly, hence rapid flash flooding, we drove through this water which rose up the windscreen and luckily I used to spray my engine with a lacquer which prevented tracking and probably saved my venture through this flash flood.

FLASH FLOODING OMAN



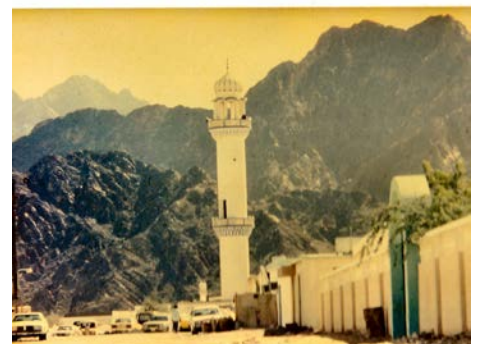
Flash flooding is dangerous and comes without warning especially in rocky terrain where any rainfall just flows rapidly downhill 100%.



WHADI HAIFA OMAN

The walled buildings, (Col 2) is constructed on top of a natural wall of rock, but the foreground would flood easily should it rain suddenly and you wouldn't hear it coming until you woke up knee deep in an instant fast flowing river..

CENTRE OF OLD MUSCAT



Complete with Mosque and large wall to keep out visitors.

ROADSIDE FISHING



Following this sudden rise in water level stands a lone fisherman with two large fish balanced on his head ready for a quick sale.

GREEN CORNER PICNIC



A popular picnic area for the Arabs was aptly named because of the only bit of greenery, for miles around, and easy to find on the way to Muscat.

RHAMS THE END OF TIME



Whilst most animals roam free here and there is not one person visible, should you accidentally run over one of these animals, the owner will miraculously appear from nowhere claiming compensation for the loss of his favourite animal.

Who arrives first on the scene claims this unwritten law.

RHAMS NORTHERN OMAN



A strange place, no one appears in the midday sun, even the goats keep out of the hot sun at 46c.

Lots of these places still have small Forts to guard against raiders from other areas. These days are gone now with everyone owning a Nissan truck or Peugeot pickup and have instant retaliation toward raiders

SEEB AIRPORT MUSCAT



This airport blends into the desert landscape and hard to see from a distance, therefore a good knowledge of the terrain is important.

40 years on everyone uses GPS (satnav). Awareness of position is still very important, and the Bedouin is no exception to his own position on the map, considering that he doesn't probably possess a map, but he will have 2 X 200 ltr of fuel in the back of his truck, and only drive his vehicle when traversing the desert, directly to his destination. He will know every rock and feature of this barren land, and he doesn't have to re-boot his knowledge, simple!

MAP OF OMAN, UAE



40 Years ago this part of the world was rather barren with no road between Muscat and Salalah where the RAF had a base with a nice long runway.

Security forts have become obsolete as everyone has a mobile phone and Muscat offers luxury six night holiday breaks with plenty of sunshine.

THE OPEN HANGAR DOORS



Back at Biggin Hill, a 'Classic Remark' was uttered, "the hangar doors are always open."

The urn was bubbling away inside the small canteen, the tea in the pot stewing silently away

With the aircraft parked around the edge of the hangar apron time for a quick slurp of tanning fluid (tea) followed by some precise prop swinging, engines burst into life emitting a puff of blue smoke from each exhaust.

1979 A BUSY YEAR FOR JB



A flying member from Aerogulf at Dubai whom JB had taught to fly was in the UK on leave from his business in the UAE.

He already owned a 205 Cessna and I spent quite a bit of time with him flying to where he was road building and had the facilities to grade a strip of sufficient length and width.

He became quite proficient at his desert strips until he taxied into a hole one day, damaging the undercarriage.

He called from Dubai to explain what had happened and then to say he had been explaining to the UAE military what had happened, and they suggested they would rescue his aircraft using one of their

helicopters as an exercise. They board the helicopter, complete with aircraft owner and what should have been a suitable strop?? The next thing was the aircraft below began to climb up to the helicopter.

Instant panic, the crew cut the aircraft free of the helicopter and they all watched as it plummeted to the desert below from 2,000ft. I think a lack of experience and glad to be rid of the slung load.

MAULE 235 REPLACEMENT

He now explained that he had already bought this other aircraft a Maule 235 and could I go and collect it from Staverton.

Another Instructor from Dubai was in the UK on leave from Dubai came with me to collect the aircraft from Staverton.

We based the Maule at White Waltham as the owner lived close by and provided me with a car a 206 Peugeot.

We would do quite a lot of flying in and out of short strips in the UK in preparation for return to Dubai.

I was going to ferry the Maule to Dubai when the time came. This gave us time to find some ferry tanks – we were in luck, Staverton had a set of 3 tanks, capacity with a possible range of 2275 subject to winds aloft.

CANNES FILM FESTIVAL



Ted Wein and the editor JB. This was an excellent venue of film stars

ISLE OF WIGHT RESCUE



Not too serious, just rectifying a mag drop for Mike Hood and his tourist flying business on the IOW. Cobby 'tip toes' across the damp grass, in his Jesus sandals.

MIKE & JB ON THE IOW



Whilst Cobby fixed the mag drop we posed for a picture, before leaving Mike on the IOW with his DH Rapide and his pleasure flying, until the next international rescue.

THE ARROW SPORT 1980



It came to Cobaircraft in boxes and brown paper parcels, a pair of the original hand made wheels corroded beyond any recognition as that of a wheel!!



The builder of this historic aircraft went on the search for a pair of suitable motorcycle wheels with cable operated brakes. All we need is a successful flight.

WE HAVE SOME PROBLEMS!



One simple circuit was enough for now, a cup of sweet tea would go down a treat just now. Eventually it was flown to Duxford where it was sold at auction. It now hangs in museum as part of the Smithsonian Aviation collection.



Probably the safest place to be appreciated in a wonderful static display with some real historic designs dreamed up on a large piece of paper and given a title and then stored for posterity and a sure future without being smashed to bits – looking serene forever as it looks down from its gallery above

FARNBOROUGH 1979



The lovely Genevieve Bertelay from Guadaloupe. We spent a lot of time together at the big airshows across Europe, these were good times and a great bunch of Hostess's that travelled the airshows across Europe and South Africa and the UAE

I was going to leave with the Maule 235 for Dubai in two days, when Don Bullock walked in to the bar requesting I wait until after the airshow which he described as being the best ever, I said I couldn't wait as I had a wedding to attend in Paris and I had to leave tomorrow..

THE MAULE AT TOUSUS



The wedding went well and I decided to get going toward Corfu Cyprus and Iraq as I had all my clearances and at Toussus today, it

was thick fog, could only see about 30ft – no point risking a flight in these conditions

However the fog cleared as I sat down to lunch.

Two other pilots had already departed by airline for Karachi the plan was we would all rendezvous at Iraq airport for the night.

I arrived at Corfu, went to the Flight Office and was told the FIR is closed, what are my intentions? I will come back tomorrow. I am still just ahead of my schedule

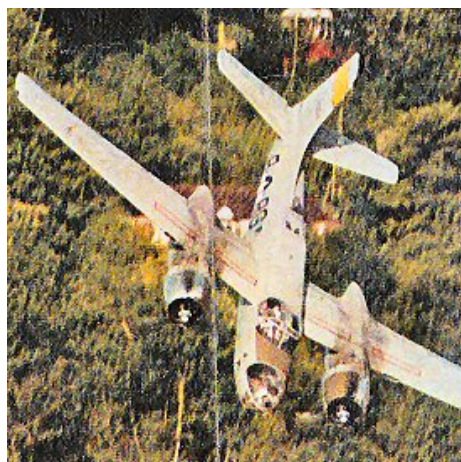
The next morning I go straight to the Flight Planning Officer and he told me the FIR is closed, but not sure of any reason except Iraq / Iran war.

Ah!!!, yes! Those of us that were living in UAE at this time thought it was a lot of hot air blowing across the desert.

I decided to go to the terminal for a coffee and saw a newspaper report on bomber crash at Air Show.

I immediately phoned Biggin Hill to confirm my worst fears.

DON BULLOCK B26 CRASH



The last moments, fortunately it did not crash into any nearby houses, but it was fully loaded with passengers. The aircraft failed to recover from a barrel roll exploding as it hit the ground.

DEPARTING CAIRO

Filing a flight plan for technical landing only enroute Jeddah.

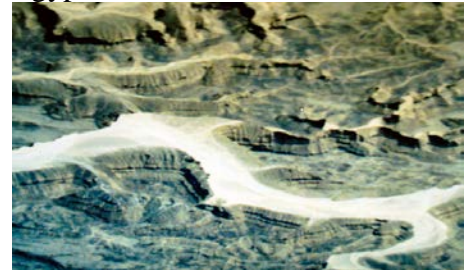


No one asked too many questions about my being, they accepted my landing fee and I left.

CENTRAL CAIRO BELOW



I leave Cairo behind and head across the inhospitable desert of Egypt.



EGYPT TO SAUDI ARABIA



Fortunately I know Jeddah Airport very well, and I have a friendly Arab who owns a Seneca III which I have flown for him to Bahrain for maintenance checks at various times.

JEDDAH AIRPORT APRON

A little knowledge of the apron layout and parking for transit aircraft outside the landing office so as not to draw attention to myself, I grab a taxi and head for a hotel (non alcoholic), down town.

EARLY MORNING JEDDAH

Some skilful taking required when I manage to get through the barrier right opposite where I parked last night. Instead I had to walk a mile down to the General Aviation gate where a lone Arab sat with his Lee Enfield .303 Rifle.

I saluted, he stood up, saluted in return and I was in, now I had to walk a mile back on the other side of the fence to the landing office, where I was greeted to a glass of tea as the man behind the counter started thumbing through a large pile of papers, finding nothing, I tried to explain I didn't have a clearance, yet he insisted he would find it, it must be here somewhere.

He didn't know about the Iraqi / Iranian conflict.

Time to ask if he knew my Sheik friend, with the Seneca III

Yes ! he does know him and Gets him on the phone

I call him and explain my situation, asking if he is coming to the airport, he agrees to come and meet me, but for the moment he is sleeping. When he will appear, is a mystery. Could be soon, or later.

1:30 passes, so I call him again and he is still sleeping, but he is coming this time, and is sending the 'chief of police' on the airport to take care of me.

He duly arrives and takes me to his office a mile further on and offers me some green coffee.

FIVE HOURS NEGOTIATING

This time was without duress, but one must be patient whilst each person does his part in this request for a flight clearance.

RANGE AND ENDURANCE

Once the Saudi's realised there was a war of sorts, they then wanted know how I was able to travel so far in a small aircraft. Explaining the ferry tanks installed they said I was clear to go direct to Dubai, and I still had enough fuel onboard for this last leg.

It was now mid – afternoon as I departed Jeddah with bad haze. As I passed Bahrain I developed a Regulator failure, now what! It was going to get dark soon. I made my concerns to Dubai and advised them I would report every 30 minutes and would shut down electrics in between.

I was now in friendly country and arrived in Dubai at 2am local time with some off duty staff to greet me with a cold beer.

My French friends had arrived and gone to a hotel, but were unaware of my problems or position.



MY FRENCH COLLEAGUES

Appeared during the the next morning and we got together on the beach at Jebel Ahli asking what I did and which way I went.

They also said, what if we do the same thing as you?

I replied, they will be waiting for you, you will do better off waiting here in Dubai

They decided to go to Bahrain and wait there which amounted to five days off waiting.



The two Frenchman, Maurice Sereé, and Francis Culville. Good people to travel with on long trips throughout Africa.

JB HEADS FOR TEXAS



I decided to go and celebrate Xmas with Derek White of Anglo American Flight School at Meecham Field, at Dallas Fort Worth Texas, I stayed here for 5 months before moving on in 1980.