



# 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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## A HANGAR WITH A VIEW

AVIATION of Biggin Hill has without a doubt the best view over the airfield and London beyond from their panoramic reception area.

Operating a fleet of small business Jets to Europe and beyond, at your convenience for Charter.

The Company has many years experience in aviation from Aircraft Sales / Management / Handling / Hangarage:

Hangarage is presently available for CL-605 or similar.



Aircraft can be operated on an AOC and generate revenue when the owner doesn't require it. Office space within the hangar is available for operators / owners.



All aircraft are very comfortable fully equipped with the latest navigation equipment operating to a high flying standard.





### Aircraft Sales:

Beechcraft King Air 200 Turbo Prop aircraft, 270 Knots, Range 1870 nm. 8 seats.



### AOC Charter:

Cessna Citation II Executive Jet Range 1900nm, 370 Knots, 8 seats



### Hangarage: Handling:

Piper Navajo 7, Range 1000 nm 190 Knots, 7 seats.

### AIRFIELD PERSONALITIES



### Peter Huntley:

Aircraft owner / pilot flew out of Biggin Hill for several years, although he lived nearer to Fairoaks.

His first aircraft was a TB10 Tobago in which he commuted regularly to Eindhoven in Holland.

Eventually he upgraded to a TB20 Trinidad, 250HP, G-BSCN which had more speed and considerable range, 1100 nm.

It was in this aircraft some time later he entered a Rally to the Northern latitudes, which was organised by the ICAO French Canadians from Montreal.

## POLE NORD



## GREENLAND

Our journey would be from Fairoaks to Montreal in June 1992 with the latest GPS of the day the Trimble 2000.

**Day 1:** 1<sup>st</sup> June.

### EGTF – EGPD

Weather was poor as he and his co-pilot departed IFR to the north arriving at Aberdeen with an ILS approach for runway 16. completing this leg of 374 nm in 3.hrs 00 min.



BSCN pictured below the tower complex at Aberdeen, more aircraft would arrive during the afternoon.

**Day 2:** (2<sup>nd</sup> June) starts with low cloud and gloom, which improves on coasting out toward Reykjavik, 756 nm we completed this leg after 5 hrs 05 min.

### REYKJAVIK:(BIRK) ICELAND



Arrival at Reykjavik is a little dull but good visibility with a pleasant atmosphere at the check-in which made the long sea crossing worth while.

The beauty of this place is that the Loftleider Hotel is on the airfield a few feet from the check-in office.



Peter stands by his aircraft, with the Loftleider Hotel behind.

A new flight office is also visible.



The bar prices were a bit steep, but we couldn't complain as the beer tasted fine.

**Day 3:** 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

Today's weather is perfect, a blue sky with excellent visibility.

We leave Reykjavik with 776 nm leg ahead of us climbing to FL130 to (BGSF) Kangerlussuaq - known as **Sonderstrom**.

The ice flows appeared about 50 miles out from Greenland.

Flying over the high ground at 13,000ft the ground wasn't too far below us at 10,000ft with some ominous peaks sticking out of the wispy cloud layer below, made one

aware of a force landing in such a treacherous environment.



Final approach at Sonderstrom after 5hrs 55min from Iceland. There is a nasty bit of high ground to the right on approach, average GS 131 Kts considering climb and descent.

**Sonderstrom: (Kangerlissuaq)**



A line up of Rally aircraft at Sonderstrom waiting for the fuel man before departing on the next leg of 'Pole Nord' to Iqaluit (CYFB) Nunuvut, 507nm



3 hrs 55 min for this second leg made a total flight time of 9 hrs 50 min.

The days in these Arctic latitudes are very long, fading to a grey twilight for a couple of hours, before it begins to get light again.

We all stayed in the Discovery Lodge at Iqaluit, where a can of beer cost \$8.

**Iqaluit: (CYFB)**



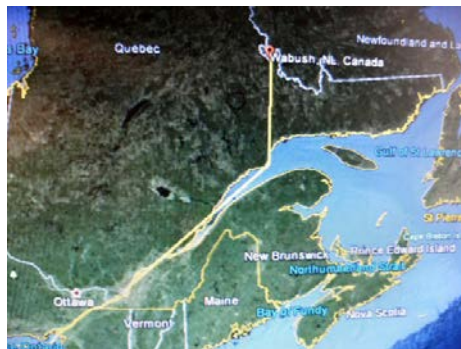
Here they don't have street names, just numbers, but the taxi drivers know where people live by the numbers.... How weird..!!

**Day 4: 4<sup>th</sup> June**

Today the rally will take everyone over the iced wastes of the Hudson Bay Straights to Wabush a small airfield for the Iron Ore mining company which employs 800.

From Wabush (CYWK) we head south bound toward Sept Isle making a dog leg around this airport continuing down the middle of the St Lawrence River to Quebec (CYQB).

Visibilty today is marvelous 50 to 100 miles.



Having settled in Quebec for the night, we all head downtown for a good restaurant, to find everyone speaks French.

We can probably blame our very own General James Wolfe of Westerham, who beat the French on the 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 1759.

Somehow he forgot to tell them to take their language with them.

**Day 5: & 6: in Montreal**

Today is a short flight down the St Lawrence to Montreal (CYMX) we will spend the next three nights here sight seeing, including all participants to take part in a low level flight around the city at 1,000 feet.



Did they say 1,000 or 100 feet ?

**Day 7: (7<sup>th</sup> June)**

This flight around the city on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day at Montreal was part of the commemoration for this 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the city dinner at the City Hall.

The occasion was presented in French and English.

**Day 8: (8<sup>th</sup> June)**

Today is the beginning of the return flight with a fairly long leg of 866 nm across inhospitable landscape from Montreal to **Kuujuuaq. (CYUP).**

The thunderstorm in Montreal last evening has gone leaving good weather for todays long flight, however one should be cautious, leave nothing to chance.



This is wild country with few roads and a lot of lakes and streams.

We refuel here and head for **Iqaluit** for a night stop at the Discovery Lodge once again and a nice can of beer – at least we know how much it costs, (It's only \$8).



With sun low in the sky behind us coupled with the ice and shadows the land becomes featureless like a huge skating rink as we fly over Nunavut Island and Iqaluit. Landing here today we will have completed 42 hrs 50 min so far.



Return to Iqaluit (CYFB)



Peters favourite wateringhole.



G-BSCN and Canadian flag on the tail of a Hercules.

### Day 9: (9<sup>th</sup> June).

Today was good weather to fly to Kulusuk (BGKK) a bad decision was made (*that turned out OK in the end*) instead of flying to Sondstrom for fuel and flying direct to Reykjavik we had decided to fly to Kulusuk at nearly 900 miles. In fact it was 854 nm and took 6 hrs 30 min. (with no alternative), also we were told the fuel was in 220 litre drums and we had to pay for it, whether or not we used it all.



Whilst overflying the top of Greenland (the forboding peaks rising to 10,000 ft) with the realative safety of Sonderstrom nearby (*how relative is this*) Sonderstrom advised us by radio that Kulusuk has a fuel truck now. Ah ! So there will be no shortage of fuel and we need only pay for what we use.

Approach to **Kulusuk** was an NDB approach through the mountains we find it only has a gravel strip.



We took 232 ltr of fuel. (Phew !!) We wont be making anymore rash decisions. **Editors note:** (*They had in fact 2hr 30 remaining, had they but known from their known consumption rate of 43 litres per hour*). (*However when fuel gauges indicate low fuel it will get your attention, which undermines your previous confidence*).

After a quick turn around we left Kulusuk climbing out through some heavy cloud picking up some ice on the windscreen until we climbed out on top into the sunshine.

We also had some trouble with the elevator trim which kept freezing and knocking out the auto pilot. So had to hand fly for a while until the trim mechanism thawed out.

We landed safely at Reykjavik, refueled etc., then headed for the Loftleider Hotel on the doorstep so to speak.

### Day 10: (10<sup>th</sup> June)

We flight planned out of Reykjavik for Aberdeen but for some reason we were diverted to Glasgow (EGPF), apparently there was some military exercises affecting the airways and airliners.

Landing at Glasgow we parked on the Handling Agents ramp, followed shortly by 4/5 Customs Agents with a dog and we were ordered out of the aircraft and they promptly put the dog in the aircraft. They also squeezed this large dog into the small rear locker, ignoring our plea's that their dogs claws were scratching the paint work. No explanation or apology for their brusque attitude.

The handling agent referred to them as a bunch of pigs.!

We departed from Glasgow and headed back to **Fairoaks (EGTF)** Approaching London TMA we developed a little rough running whereupon London Heathrow gave us vectors direct to Fairoaks.

The only people to greet us at Fairoaks, was the guy in the tower, my wife and children.

Job done: all in a standard TB20 Trinidad. No ferry tank and our trusty Trimble 2000 GPS.

### CAP SUR MONTREAL 1992

Total Distance	7216	nm
Flight Time	54	hours
Avgas 100LL	2244	litres
Average fuel	43	litres p h



On the occasion of the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Montreal

“Civil Aviation of the World” and host city to the

International Civil Aviation Organisation. It is my privilege, as Secretary General of ICAO to salute

**Peter Huntley**

for flying from England

to St Hubert Airport Quebec to participate in the Cap Sur Montreal Air Show which has brought together from the four corners of the world so many men and women who love to fly

**Phillipe Rochat**

**BOB NEEDHAM : KEMPSEY**



Bob, is one of the Bugles reporters in New South Wales in Australia is about to make a test flight in this Australian built aircraft.

How about his look alike below.?



If you don't see the comparison, cut out picture and paste over Bob's

Both have connections with Biggin Hill Airport for many years.

Bob's son Anson has recently completed building his own RV8 seen here getting some help with the riveting from his father, (listening to music more like).



**LEAVING FOR THE AIRPORT**



**VH - VBN WINGS ON READY**



A completed project in the hangar.

**LEISURELY GARDEN SCENE**

Bob says this is his backyard with many roo's taking the shade. If you look carefully in the left of this picture an umbrella with table and chairs is visible where he claims to watch his native friends with a couple of 'tinnies'.



Bob, Anson with their friends celebrate with a couple of 'tinnies'

*Editors note: It appears that Bob has claimed more land than he is officially entitled too.*

*We are unable to see any fencing, therefore his best defense is to claim he is caring for the natural Fauna of Australia, which has no boundaries.!!*

**THE TEST FLIGHT VH-VBN**



With Anson Needham over the Old Macquarie Aerodrome, NSW.

**ALIEN MYSTERY AT BIGGIN !**



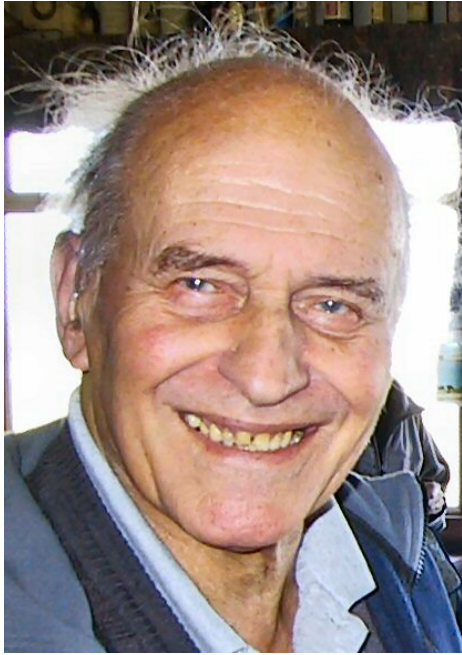
This scary apparition appeared to be over Biggin Hill recently. The photographer was totally unaware, he had captured this eerie image.

It was only when the bigger picture (below) content became apparent.



The Bugles technical photographic team spotted the potential of a cropped image. **Real spooky eh !!**

## REX NICHOLLS :



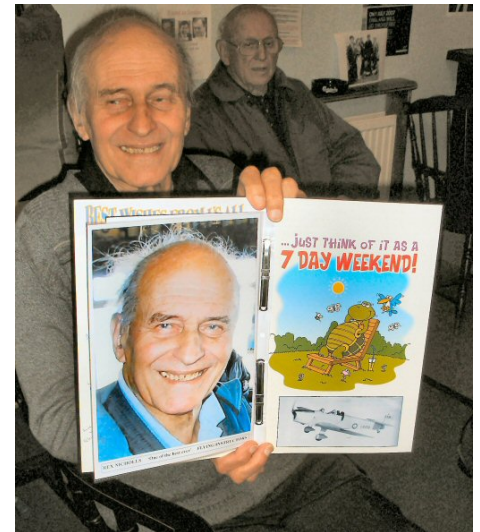
**22 Mar 1927 - 26 Oct 2014**

Rex Nicholls claimed to have been the first person to have landed at Biggin Hill on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1959 flying a Miles Hawk Trainer III G-AKAS following the closure of Croydon Airport. There were of course many others that followed including the late Bill Webb in a DH Heron of Morton Air Services. Rex had remained at Biggin Hill for the past 55 years. Rex learned to fly with the late Jean Bird, a former ATA pilot in 1950, at Red Hill Aerodrome. Other people were interested in learning to fly hence the formation of the Experimental Flying Group in which people could learn to fly without payment. It is a long story, so we will leave it there. The RAF Volunteer Reserve which occupied the site at Redhill at that time sold it off. The group (EFG) would move to Croydon. Without premises, they continued to operate, using the then Ministry of Aviation facilities, such as their briefing room, and other areas within the Ministry of Aviation premises at Croydon Airport to the annoyance of the SATCO at that time. Having established his place at Biggin Hill, Rex would become an Instructors, Instructor as well as the CFI of EFG a post he would hold until 1985. Aviation being in its infancy in those days was somewhat of a unique dynasty.

If one had the necessary experience it was a formality to apply for a particular Rating to the Ministry of Aviation and it would be formerly granted. Nonetheless, Rex would become a *'Top of the Tree' Instructor* with a flying career spanning 57 years, and of course he was a PPL Examiner, granting many students their license and a career in aviation, or just the freedom to fly. Rex would continue in this role until an untimely accident to his leg whilst gardening in the year 2001 precluding his flying future. During his 57 years of flying, Rex amassed some 16,000 hours of flying, and probably instructed as many students. A highlight of his time at Biggin Hill would be as a member of the Kings Cup Air Race team in 1966 with Surrey and Kent Flying Club which entered two DH Chipmunks. The pilots would be Rex Nicholls and John Miles (*of 600 Squadron*), who won the race, in G-APTS returning to Biggin Hill with the trophy. Rex had a very retentive memory and was able to quote many wonderful aviation stories. EFG also operated a Rollason Condor from 1967 – 1970 in which Rex flew to Benson in 67 to enable the Duke of Edinburgh to have some familiarization flying on the type. This aircraft was flown in the Nationals by Rex at Tollerton August 1968 and in the Goodyear Trophy at Halfpenny Green in September 1968. Rex married Janet in 1972, they had 4 children, plus two grandchildren.. (*his wife Janet was also a pilot, starting her flying career at the age of 15 when she joined the Womens Junior Air Corps – later becoming the Girls Venture Corps Air Wing, and built up many hours flying experience, firstly at Croydon and then at Biggin Hill with EFG. After being awarded a flying scholarship in 1967, she gained her PPL (trained by Rex) flying Condors and Austers* Rex celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on March 24<sup>th</sup> 2007 at the

'Pilots Pals' bar, Biggin Hill.

This secret tumultuous event would be the culmination of his aviation prowess, arranged by his wife Janet and a few other unscrupulous aviation types sworn to total secrecy, even down to *hiding his shoes*, so that he couldn't go out unannounced and spoil the surprise party. In all 80 plus people attended this grand occasion with many pilots bringing photographic memories of their flying activities over the years, many of which had some connection with Rex who had obviously played a major role in their flying careers. Rex remained a regular visitor to Biggin Hill, maintaining his life-long interest in aviation. Finally, Rex would teach his eldest son Ivor to fly, who gained his PPL in 1991, ensuring the name of Nicholls would live on in aviation for many years to come.



Rex was a man with a pleasant smile and friendly personality.

**A final toast to Rex as the 'The Hangar Doors' close, on this, his final flight. JB**