

A visit to Shipping and Airlines at Biggin Hill



Peter Greenyer and the Shipping and Airlines collection at Biggin Hill



N444M in its later yellow scheme, seen at Badminton House airstrip

At the Vintage Aircraft Club Annual Dinner in March, Hilary and I met Peter Greenyer and a team of his engineering personnel from Shipping and Airlines at Biggin Hill. We had a long chat about the Grumman Widgeon N444M, which is used as part of their logo and which I had photographed in the 1970s at Biggin Hill in its original two-tone green colour scheme.

Peter generously said 'come and see us any time and you can photograph our aircraft collection to your heart's content'.

After some discussion of possible dates, Peter suggested that we come along for an open day that they had planned with the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and Navigators on June 25th. This we were very happy to do, a particular attraction from my point of view being the opportunity to have a good look at and photograph the sole Civilian Coupé G-ABNT.

The visit of the Honourable Company took in the RAF Chapel, followed by a buffet lunch and an opportunity to fly in aircraft from the collection. We had a welcoming speech at lunch from Will Curtis, Managing Director of Biggin Hill Airport Ltd, who talked about the future of the airport and its growth plans centred on business aviation and the technical training of licensed engineers for the aviation industry.

A flying visitor for the event was De Havilland DH85 Leopard Moth G-ACUS with Ron & Valery Gammons on board.

This was a fascinating opportunity to get close to some immaculate and rare vintage aircraft and was greatly appreciated by all who were able to be there.

The aircraft present were as follows:
1929 Curtiss Wright Travel Air 12Q G-AAOK
1931 Civilian Coupé G-ABNT
1936 Rearwin 8500 Sportster G-AEOF
1936 De Havilland DH87B Hornet Moth G-AHBL
1937 De Havilland DH90 Dragonfly G-AEDU
1943 Piper Cub 31145 G-BBLH
1945 Miles M38 Messenger 4B G-AKVZ

Interesting aircraft also to be seen included
Cessna 195 G-BSPK
Lake 250 Renegade G-LAKE
De Havilland DH85 Leopard Moth G-ACUS

A delightful day, with magnificent aircraft to enjoy, for which many thanks are due to the generosity of all at Shipping & Airlines Ltd. A gallery of sample photographs is shown below.



