

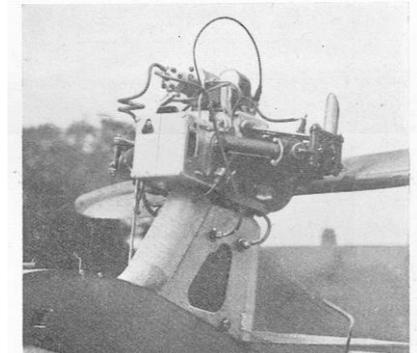
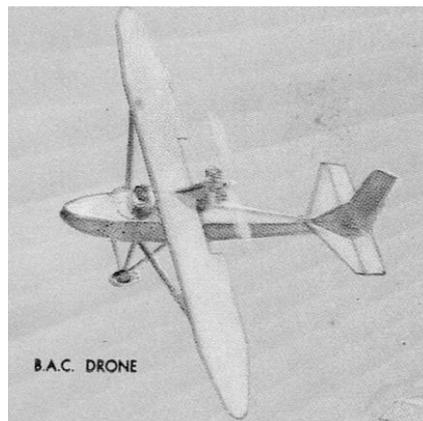
Desert experience included Aden, Bahrain, and Oman balanced by a less sunny period in Germany on Jaguars. It was in 1980 at RAF Brawdy with No.1 Tactical Weapons Unit that Rod became Officer Commanding 79 Squadron with all the responsibilities it entailed as well as displays at open days there. For Rod, flying jets did not finish on leaving the RAF as he had met Spencer Flack in 1981 who had a small fleet and there was a number of other civilian owned vintage jet aircraft such as the Meteor, Vampire, Venom, T33, and F86 Sabre as well as, not surprisingly, the Hunter.

NOTHING NEW.....

We hear a lot about drones but in 1936 a Super Drone flew from Croydon to Berlin (570 miles) and back a couple of days later piloted by Lord Sempill. The aircraft, made by B.A.C (1935) Ltd was powered by a 750cc Douglas flat twin motor bike engine, cruised at 60mph and took eleven hours averaging 54.5mph. The flight broke an existing record of distance flown in a straight line by a single seater weighing less than 440lb. An incorrect weather forecast meant that the cloud base forced him down to sea level on the way out and the return trip took 9 hours. (Pics courtesy of Flight 9th April and 23rd April 1936)



PROOF : Lord Sempill's flight to Berlin (11 hours) and back (9 hours) in a B.A.C. Super Drone must have given a jolt to those who habitually scoff at ultra-light aircraft. Lord Sempill is seen at Croydon with Mr. Kronfeld (right). Comment on



The 750 c.c. Douglas engine of the type used in the Drone. (Flight photograph.)

A SNIPPET OF SOUTHAMPTON

The Ford factory in Southampton, that once was the home of Cunliffe-Owen, was used by Briggs Motor Bodies Ltd to make jet engine components. Their speciality was large press work and in the early '50s many parts, such as combustion chambers jet pipes and oil tanks were made of pressings along with a selection of other precision engineering processes such as welding and grinding. The work was not easy because of the heat resistant materials and Nimonic alloys. Customers were main producers such as Rolls-Royce and Armstrong Whitworth as well as provision of spares direct to users. Briggs Motor Bodies was eventually taken over by Ford. Source Flight 6th May 1955

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