



## *Chicklade*

### **1963 BAC One-Eleven Test Crash**

The 1963 BAC One-Eleven test crash was a fatal accident of a British Aircraft Corporation aircraft on 22 October 1963, near Chicklade in Wiltshire, England.

The accident occurred during a test-flight of a BAC One-Eleven (registration G-ASHG) which had taken off from Wisley Airfield with seven crew on board, piloted by Mike Lithgow. The BAC One-Eleven was on its fifth test flight to assess stability and handling characteristics during the approach to and recovery from a stall with the centre of gravity in varying positions. From an altitude of 16,000 feet (4,900 m) with 8° of flaps, the plane entered a stable stall with the aircraft descending at a high rate of descent in a horizontal attitude, eventually striking the ground with very little forward speed. The aircraft broke up and caught fire, killing all seven crew on board at Cratt Hill, near Chicklade a small village in southern Wiltshire, adjacent to the A303.

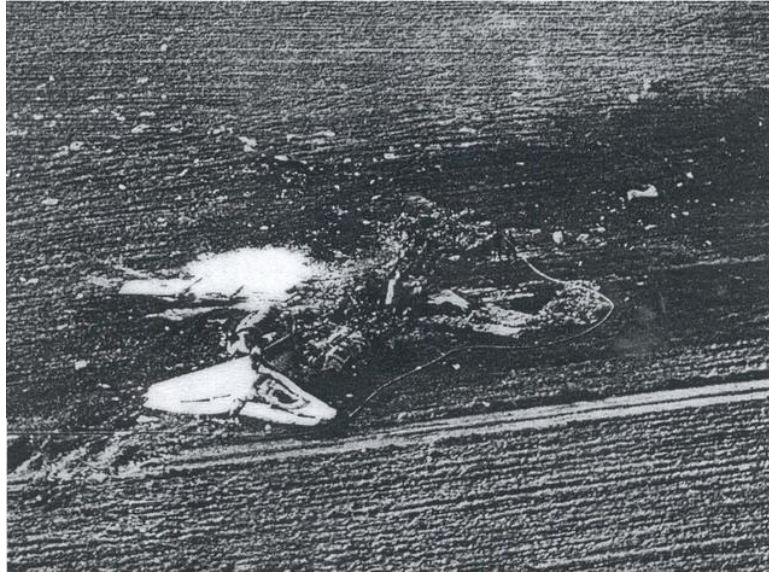
The plane was on its fifth stalling test of the day, and the crash occurred 23 minutes after take-off from Wisley. The crew were Lt. Cdr. M. J. Lithgow OBE, Chief Test Pilot; Capt. R. Rymer (Test Pilot); B. J. Prior (Aerodynamist); C. J. Webb (Designer); R. A. F. Wright (Senior Observer); G. R. Poulter (Observer) and D. J. Clarke (Observer).

The cause of the accident was the aircraft entering a stable stalled condition, recovery from which was impossible due to the wings blocking the airflow from the elevators on the tail. This was the first accident to be attributed to the phenomenon known as deep stall, peculiar to rear engine T-tailed aircraft

Once the condition of deep stall was recognized relatively simple preventative measures were introduced, including stick-shakers indicating approaching stall and stick-pushers which physically lower the nose before the stall is reached, while the tailplane and pitch controls are still effective

In October 2013 a stone memorial was dedicated at the crash site, listing the seven victims. The ceremony was attended by the CO of the Royal Navy Historic Flight, Lord Margadale (the owner of the land), and family members of the crew. The memorial bears a quotation from the annotation of the 1817 edition of a poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge: '...and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them and is their appointed rest and their native country

*(Wikipedia)*



**Crash of BAC-111 at Chicklade 22 Oct, 1963**

*(Photo from Bureau of Aircraft Accidents Archives)*

A Memorial Plaque was laid in 2013, at the site of the crash, marking the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the crash date.



**Memorial Stone at the crash site on BAC 1-11 G-ASHG which crashed on 22 Oct 1963**

*(Photo by Peter Clark - bac1-11jet.co.uk)*

A Memorial Plaque to the seven men who died in the 1963 crash is also located in the Memorial Garden at Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey.

