

## SEAPLANE LANDS AT BOUGH BEECH RESERVOIR – THEN SINKS!



The museum has recently been donated a set of photographs from the collection of the Late Roy Coles who was warden at Bough Beech Reservoir, and he was on-site on the day an American Grumman Widgeon seaplane, enroute to Biggin Hill from Gatwick attempted an emergency landing on the reservoir.

It was reported in the local press that the plane was seen circling just after 4pm by Water Bailiff Jock Honess. It circled twice before making several attempts to land on the water; on the final attempt it tipped over and sank in more than 30 feet of water. It was later reported that engine difficulties had led the pilot, Stanley Woodward attempt to bring the aircraft down safely on the reservoir, an attempt that largely failed. In addition to the pilot there were two passengers, Ida Dallalpour (20) and Peter Salter (28). As the plane sank, the pilot clambered onto the tail of the plane, whilst Ida and Peter swam some 20 yards in the freezing cold water to the shore.

The pilot was subsequently rescued by Jock Honess and three other water company workers and he, along with the two passengers were taken to Edenbridge Hospital where they were treated for shock and exposure before later being released.

Department of Trade investigators and police frogmen arrived and inspected the plane which was secured to a bank for the night. Officials of the East Surrey Water Company were on the scene to make sure 100 gallons of aviation fuel had not escaped into the reservoir.

