

No: 9/92

Ref: EW/G92/07/14

Category: 1c

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** De Havilland DH82A Tiger Moth, G-AJOA

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 De Havilland Gipsy Major 1C piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1940

**Date & Time (UTC):** 18 July 1992 at 1830 hrs

**Location:** Shepherds Lane, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire

**Type of Flight:** Private

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1                      Passengers - None

**Injuries:** Crew - None                      Passengers - N/A

**Nature of Damage:** Propeller and chin cowlings. Subsequent extensive damage by vandals.

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence with IMC and Night ratings

**Commander's Age:** 57 years

**Commander's Flying Experience:** 1,274 hours (all on type)  
Last 90 days - 37 hours  
Last 28 days - 14 hours

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

Because of intended aerobatic flight, the refueller had been instructed to leave the tank two gallons short of maximum fuel when refuelling the aircraft on the morning of the accident - this should have provided sufficient fuel for two hours 35 minutes flying.

Three sorties of approximately 15 minutes each were flown. These were followed by a fourth sortie, with an estimated flying time of one hour 10 minutes, involving a display. The pilot realised after take off that he had less fuel than expected. An unplanned 20 minute hold prior to the display further reduced the fuel reserves and the pilot intended to refuel at Denham before returning to a private strip at Pangbourne.

The fuel was exhausted after two hours flying time and he made a successful forced landing approximately three miles from Denham during which the chin cowling was dented and the propeller tip fractured. The aircraft was left for two hours while the pilot was arranging for its recovery and during this period it was extensively damaged by vandals.

Although the pilot failed to make a visual check of the fuel state before flight, the sloping runway threshold of the private strip gave the aircraft an unusually tail down attitude before take off which could have caused the fuel float gauge to over-read.