

Hi everyone

Welcome to the October 2020 Newsletter for the Biggin Hill Airport Users Database. Welcome also to any new Database members who may be receiving this regular Newsletter for the first time. A short one this month, as I was away from Biggin for half of it...

You are reminded that, even if you don't get your Newsletter by email, you can always view it online, as well as any back copies of this Newsletter by visiting the club website at www.bigginhillclub.co.uk

(If you have not received your copy within 24 hours of the beginning of the month, please check the club website above where you can find and draw it down for yourself!)

SEPTEMBER WEATHER

The September weather has, in the main, been quite good for light aircraft operations, but as we approach the month end, it appears conditions are expected to deteriorate somewhat. Let's hope any deterioration will be short lived and we have some good flying weather to come....

Unfortunately 2020 has, due to Covid restrictions of course, been quite a bad year for light aviation, having been stopped from all operations for several months.

Here's hoping for less restrictions for the rest of the year. I'm not holding my breath though!

JOHN CHESTER

It was with great sadness we heard of the passing of another old Biggin Hill'ite, John Chester, who died on 14th September at the ripe old age of 97. John will be fondly remembered by the older members who were around on the airport in the 1960's.

He started his Royal Air Force pilot training at RAF Clyffe Pypard EFTS in 1945 where he initially flew Tiger Moths, That course was later terminated due to the post- war falling demand for pilots.

On leaving RAF it is believed he went into the print trade.

Most oldies will remember him flying with 600 squadron flying group at Croydon and he subsequently moved with them to Biggin Hill, where he became a flying instructor for them at Biggin Hill flying Tigers, Chipmunks, Austers, etc... He was well respected by all who knew him, and was good friends with most Biggin Hill airport users in particular with the Lee brothers (Stan, Bob, and Dennis), Harry Groves, and 600's CFI, John Miles.

He was apparently a member of the Royal Observer Corps, was also very involved in sailing, which seemed to replace much of his flying from the late 1960s. But in spite of that, he maintained his interest in aviation by membership of a local scale model flying club and his skill in building the models was considerable.

John's funeral will be at Tunbridge Wells Crematorium on October 1 at 3.15pm. Unfortunately though, Covid rules will make the event a family only attendance.

A real gentleman, John will be missed by his many old friends from the airport. His name has been added to the Roll of Honour at www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk

R.I.P. John

IAN BRANCH

On 8th September we received the sad news that old Biggin Hill'ite, 73 year old Ian Branch, died after suffering from ill health for some years.

Sometimes a controversial character, Ian was nevertheless good friends with many airport people, particularly the many members of the Pilots Pals club and bar, and many will miss him.

Ian was in the US Army, where he learnt to fly in Piper Cub's in the US Army Flying Club at Forney Field at Fort Leonard-Wood Missouri in 1969. When he returned to the UK in the late 70's, he joined Alouette Flying Club at Biggin Hill gaining his UK PPL. During the 90's he went on to get his IMC Rating and Instructor's Rating at Southend, and for a short time he instructed with Flight Training International in Cannes, France.

He subsequently became a driving instructor, working with the British School of Motoring, which he continued to do when ill health prevented him from flying any more.

He was a frequent user of Joe Merchant's Pilots Pals bar and, when that closed in 2007, he could be seen as a regular visitor in the Old Jail and latterly in the Aperfield Inn.

His name has been added to the Roll of Honour at www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk

Ian will be remembered by his airport friends - R.I.P. Ian

REMINDER OF BIGGIN HILL'S NOISE ABATEMENT CHANGES

Most of you will, of course, already be aware of the revised noise abatement routing for departures from runway 21 at Biggin Hill.

The original requirement was for a right hand turn at the end of the runway to "track" 220 degrees until 2 miles. Unfortunately many people were not getting to the end of the runway before making this track change, and this was actually causing complaints from residents at the top of Saltbox.

As a result, there is a trial of a new temporary VFR noise abatement procedure for runway 21 (as now NOTAM'd) to try to avoid upsetting residents in that area. The NOTAM effectively reads:

Eastbound (ie. all except westbound!) traffic to maintain runway track until 1.0 mile DME on the BIG VOR/DME. Then turn right to track 220 degrees until 2.0 miles DME on BIG. Then turn left on-course after crossing the ridge and before the M25 motorway. Aircraft are to remain south of Tatsfield village and clear of the Biggin ATZ at all times after that left turn. (ie. do NOT re-enter the ATZ to route towards Swanley if going North East bound!)

Westbound traffic to maintain runway track until 1.0 mile DME on the BIG VOR/DME. Then turn right to the desired track, remaining clear of controlled airspace.

It is important to be aware of the "avoid" areas of Biggin Hill village, Tatsfield, and Downe, as well as the residential parts along the main A233 that runs past the airport.

Generally, most Biggin Hill based pilots are extremely good at respecting the airport's residential neighbours but of course it never hurts to remind us all of the required routes.

(Of course, we should all regularly check the A.I.P. entries for the airport and current NOTAM's, and those who use SkyDemon will also have the excellent pictorial of the areas to avoid to help.)

OCTOBER BIGGIN HILL POSTED FUEL PRICES

The “posted” Biggin Hill Airport fuel prices, excluding VAT, for the calendar month of October 2020 are:

£1:38 per litre for 100LL Avgas if supplied from the Fuel Bowser
(if uplifted using account card or credit card from the Self-Refuel pumps = minus 4p per litre)

£0:47.75 per litre for Jet A1

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CLUBS, BUSINESSES & OTHER AIRPORT USERS

If you would like me to include your business or personal comments in the Newsletter, either on a regular basis, or just occasionally, please drop me an email with your contact details and the requested contribution and I will try to include it in the next Newsletter. I will acknowledge anything sent to me for inclusion. (Please email: John Willis at john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk)

ALOUETTE FLYING CLUB

Confused? Can we meet, can't we meet? Does the bar open until 10pm only? What about the family or my neighbour?

Yep, I'm confused.

And we understand some are concerned for their health. But what is certain is that Alouette is flying and making the most of this showery weather.

We still have every precaution against Covid-19 in place; making our clubhouse and aircraft a safe place to touch and breathe.

Don't forget those written tests either. Get them done at Alouette.

Check out our website at www.alouette.org.uk and get yourself (and others) in the sky.

Regards
Bruno Bruniges - Club Chairman

MONTHLY NEWS FROM THE CEO'S OFFICE

Unsurprisingly, I start my monthly newsletter update making reference to the continued unpredictable nature of the current COVID 19 crisis and its severe impact of the Aviation sector. This week the Airport Operators Association has again written to central government seeking financial support to both Airports and Airlines and continues to ask that testing facilities are established at Airports and other ports of entry. The understandable escalation of local lockdowns together with the governments message of discouraging foreign travel does little to help an industry already on its knees. That said, the Airport remains cautiously optimistic as Business Aviation has demonstrated it is agile, flexible and resilient.

Both August and September have seen the Airport return to activity levels in line with, if not above, previous years. That said, “One swallow does not make a summer...” and the Airport continues to trade at a loss against budget. As confidence in the scheduled sector remains low, many corporate travellers appear to be looking at business aviation to provide a safe and secure air travel environment. The Airport has managed to attract new customers to the Business Aviation market and must now work tirelessly to retain them.

Developments at the Airport continue at pace and, most notably, the roof and external cladding is starting to appear of the Bombardier hangar development. The project remains slightly ahead of

schedule and on target for completion in April 2022. Again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all tenants and partners for their continued cooperation and understanding as this development progresses. Due to concerns regarding weather and planned outages of the VOR/DME, the Airport has decided to delay the installation of the new ILS until April next year. Most of the enabling works are complete and the existing ILS is stable; therefore, the Airport felt the most prudent decision was to delay until early next year.

Work continues on improving compliance with our published noise abatement procedures. I have been impressed and remain grateful for the support we have received from the light Aviation Community, certainly as it regards Biggin Hill and Tatsfield Noise Sensitive Areas. That said, we need to ensure infringements are closely monitored and that local residents see that all operators take noise abatement seriously.

Finally, I hope you and your family remain safe and well

Cheers

David Winstanley

ROLL OF HONOUR

Thank you to members that continue to provide us with additional names of old Biggin Hill'ites who we had missed. The Roll of Honour can be seen on the website at www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk

(Anyone who flew from, or worked, or even socialised regularly at the airport since it became a civilian base in 1959/60 and who has passed away, should ideally be included on there. If you know of someone whose name belongs on the Roll, please email me with their names, and details at john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk)

DATABASE EMAIL ADDRESSES

A constantly updated list of database members can be seen at <http://www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk> Please remember to let me know if your email address is changed. If you know others who are not on the list but are eligible to join (i.e. if they currently fly from the airport, or work there, or ever have done so) please let me know or tell them about us – Database membership is, of course, free.

That's it again for this month –please all stay well and stay safe.....

John Willis
Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

(And Finally: As usual, a few amusing stories that, according to the many comments I receive about this section, is very popular amongst the membership. (As always, no offence to anyone is intended!). Thanks to everyone for sending their contributions to this section.... Please keep them coming by email to john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk .

QUOTE.....

Paraprosdokians are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected and is frequently humorous.

- 1.. Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
- 2.. The last thing I want to do is hurt you ... but it's still on my list.
- 3.. Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

- 4.. If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
- 5.. We never really grow up -- we only learn how to act in public.
- 6.. War does not determine who is right, only who is left.
- 7.. Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
- 8.. To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.
- 9.. I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
10. In filling out an application, where it says, "In case of emergency, notify... I answered " a doctor."
11. Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.
12. You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
13. I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.
14. To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.
15. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian, any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
16. You're never too old to learn something stupid.
17. I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one now.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Four old guys are walking down a street. They turn a corner and see a sign that says,

"Old Timers Bar ALL drinks 10 cents."

They look at each other and then go in, thinking this is too good to be true.

The old bartender says in a voice that carries across the room, "Come on in and let me pour one for you! What'll it be, gentlemen?"

There's a fully stocked bar, so each of the men orders a martini.

In no time the bartender serves up four iced martinis shaken, not stirred and says, "That's 10 cents each, please."

The four guys stare at the bartender for a moment, then at each other. They can't believe their good luck. They pay the 40 cents, finish their martinis, and order another round.

Again, four excellent martinis are produced, with the bartender again saying, "That's 40 cents, please." They pay 40 cents, but their curiosity gets the better of them. They've each had two martinis and haven't even spent a dollar yet.

Finally one of them says, "How can you afford to serve martinis as good as these for a dime apiece?"

"I'm a retired tailor from Phoenix," the bartender says, "and I always wanted to own a bar. Last year I hit the Lottery Jackpot for \$125 million and decided to open this place. Every drink costs a dime. Wine, Liquor, beer it's all the same."

"Wow! That's some story!" one of the men says.

As the four of them sip their martinis, they can't help noticing seven other people at the end of the bar who don't have any drinks in front of them and haven't ordered anything the whole time they've been there.

Nodding at the seven at the end of the bar, one of the men asks the Bartender, "What's with them?"

The bartender says, "They're retired pilots. They're waiting for Happy Hour when drinks are half-price!

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A young fellow walks into a talent agent's office and says he wants to break into show-biz, so the agent says "O.K. kid show me what you can do".

The kid tells some jokes, does a little soft shoe, sings a bit, does an acrobatic act with an ottoman, and is good enough to impress the agent.

"Great kid! Just great!" says the agent "I can do things for ya! I think I can get you a show on T.V." (This was the early sixties.) "By the way, what's your name?"

The young man, proud and excited, exclaims "Penis Van Lesbian".

"Scuse me?" questions the agent.

"My name is Penis Van Lesbian" again replies the young man.

"Hey I'm sorry kid, you're gonna have to change your name, nobody is gonna hire you with a name like Penis Van Lesbian."

The young man is crestfallen but steadfastly refuses to change his name, so he leaves to find another agent.

A few months later he returns to the same agent. "Hey kid! Good to see ya again!" says the agent, "Are ya still looking for work? Have ya changed your name?"

With his head hanging low the young man replies "Yes. Every agent in town turned me down because of my name, Penis Van Lesbian. So I've changed it".

"Great kid, great! What's your new name?"

"Dick Van Dyke."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A young engineer applied for a salesman's job at a city department store. In fact it was the biggest store in the world where you could buy anything that you wanted.

The boss asked him, " Have you ever been a salesman before?"

"No, but I was a great engineer in Saskatoon", said the young guy.

The boss liked the cut of him and said, "you can start tomorrow and I'll come and see you when we close up shop."

The day was long and arduous for the young man, but finally 5 o'clock came around. The boss duly turned up and asked, "How many sales did you make today?".

"One" said the young salesman.

"Only one" blurted the boss, "Most of my staff make 20 or 30 sales a day. How much was the sale worth???".

"Three hundred thousand, three hundred and thirty four dollars" said the young man.

"How did you manage that?" asked the flabbergasted boss.

"Well, said the salesman, this man came in and I sold him a small fish hook, then a medium hook and finally a really large hook. Then I sold him a small fishing line, a medium one and a huge one. I asked where he was going fishing and he said down the coast. I said he would probably need a boat, so I took him down to the boat department and sold him that twenty foot schooner with the twin engines. Then he said his Escort probably wouldn't be able to pull the boat, so I took him to the car department and sold him the new Deluxe Cruiser".

The boss took two steps back and asked in astonishment, "You sold all that to a guy who came in for a fish hook?".

"No" answered the salesman, "He came in to buy a box of Tampons for his wife and I said to him, "Your weekend's fucked, you may as well go fishing".

.....UNQUOTE

(If anyone else has good examples of, for example: - Governmental stupidity and removal of the population's right to live a normal life, or simply any funny, unusual and interesting stories or anecdotes that you feel may interest or amuse our readers, please email them to me as a possible inclusion in a monthly "and Finally" ...)