

Hi everyone

The April edition of the "Bugle" from JB is now available on the web site at <http://www.pilotspals.co.uk>

Just click on the Newsletter link on the home page as normal...

(There is a small change this time - for technical reasons, it was becoming difficult and time consuming to create the newsletter in "html" format for the web, so it is going to be in Adobe Acrobat PDF format from now on. Almost everyone nowadays has Adobe Acrobat reader pre-installed on their PC's and for those who haven't, it is a free download (link provided on the page for them). One of the main advantages is that the Newsletter is now in a single multipage document, rather than separate pages, and it is instantly available to print so that you can, if you wish, have an off-screen version to read too.)

REX NICHOLLS MINI-REUNION

Saturday 24th March saw the gathering of about 80 plus guests who came to the airport to thank Rex for all his years he has given to aviation and to celebrate his 80th birthday. Rex was completely taken by surprise when he entered the club on a completely different pretext to find his whole family plus many old Biggin Hill'ites hiding out of sight until he turned the corner - a fantastic gathering of the people to whom Rex meant so much, of course many into their 70's and 80's too. (See the page in the "Bugle"). The following day, Edwin Brenninkmeyer very kindly took Rex and his wife, Janet, flying in his Cessna 210, to complete the package of surprises planned by her.

AIR FAIR 2007

It is almost that time again, with the 2007 Air Fair fast approaching. Dates for this year are 2nd and 3rd June and, if the weather is on our side, this years show promises to be one of the biggest for many years, with very heavy military participation promised (assuming no major conflicts take the aircraft out of circulation, of course). The show's overall layout is completely different this year, with most of the military aircraft on the ground parked on the Southeast Apron near Jet Aviation, rather than on the ORP next to the 03 threshold. The hospitality units have also been relocated to the crowd line adjoining the 11 threshold, rather than down at the far end, and this leaves a virtually clear and very long crowd line to make it much better for the spectators to view the show.

Because of the changes to the layout, there will not be a traditional "Static aircraft park" as such, and this should reduce the inbound air traffic on the mornings of the show and make it very slightly less restrictive for Biggin based aircraft wishing to depart to other airports for the duration of the show.

The RAF have now categorised all Air Displays to ensure they allocate their limited resources more efficiently. Biggin Hill has been categorised as a "Priority One" air show, the highest available, and is one of only five UK air shows to receive that status. They have further demonstrated the value of the

show to the Air Force by having the Chief of the Air Staff open the Saturday show, an honour indeed.

The Air Fair Ticket Office is now open and can be contacted on 01959 578270, and full and up to date details of the show that is planned can be seen by visiting their website at <http://www.airdisplaysint.co.uk/display.php>

Air Displays International (ADI) are about to write to tenants to advise them of the ticketing arrangements, but it should be borne in mind that, because of the current location of all show entry gates, not a single tenant needs to pass through a pay gate to reach their premises at any time. So traffic congestion aside, business access is unaffected through the show period. Private owners are not, of course, entitled to free air show tickets, (but many will have now gained access via their membership of Pilots Pals Club - see separate item below), so please don't hassle ADI for something that is not available.

When viewing the ADI website, have a look at the very special "Spitfire Club" (under the Hospitality menu item) - with many of you feeling the need to see the show from special front line locations, rather than fighting for space with the public, the Spitfire Club offers a luxurious way of seeing the show - enjoy a first class meal - with a bar - and a sealed off garden area with seating on the front line. Why not use the show to invite business guests to join you - compared with many ways of entertaining clients, this is relatively cheap and very impressive to be so close to the action.

Why not get together with other airfield friends and consider taking a whole table for your group? It's a hell of a lot better than wandering around in the main area all day, and could turn the weekend into something quite special. For anyone who is actually a Biggin Hill Airport resident (ie. owner, club member, based employee, tenant, etc.) ADI have agreed that they will offer you a 15% discount on the cost of Spitfire Club tickets - please mention my name (John Willis) to Colin Hitchins, who has offered all Database members who are resident at Biggin Hill Airport this facility.

More next month about the show....

HOTEL DEVELOPMENT

The hotel planning application has been turned down yet again by Bromley Council. Quite what they really want baffles some of us - they seem to prefer the eyesore of the South Camp entrance to the planned smart building.

Biggin Hill as a community (rather than as an Airport) has virtually no facilities compared with many similar sized towns - it would enhance the appearance of that site, it would offer more restaurant facilities, a smart bar available to the community for those special occasions, and facilities for business meetings and conferences to local businesses, plus of course, places for us to accommodate our friends who visit us from time to time in the immediate vicinity. On the airport side, it will not encourage the "bucket and spade" brigade that the anti airport lobby group, Flightpath, would have everyone

believe - it is needed to provide local crew accommodation for the many business jets that visit Biggin Hill on a regular basis.

The planning appeal is to be heard in around four weeks time, I understand. Lets hope someone out there looks at this more sensibly and lets the town of Biggin Hill have at least one useful facility (they stopped the swimming pool, in spite of the community supporting it and raising funds to help pay for it - what next!!!)

SOUTH CAMP DEVELOPMENT

The long discussed development of the South Camp looks significantly closer now. The old Biggin Hill School of Flying building next to the Pilots Pals Club has now been demolished to make way for the next level of development. The development will consist of two new hangars on a continuation line drawn from Marcos and Gold Air's existing hangars, and a line of small club style buildings (including locations for Cabair, Pilots Pals Club, Into the Blue, and ADI, with an airport run cafeteria and viewing area), plus new apron areas for aircraft parking. The start time for this development is uncertain, as it is dependent upon many factors outside the control of the airport, but it could well start within weeks, and quite probably before the Air Fair.

When the development begins, there will be a fence line that will stretch from the (now demolished) BHSF building, parallel with the line of new hangars, that will cut right across the front of the Pilots Pals Club. In front of that fence, airside, will become a contractors area and building site. The style of fence will be down to the contractor, not the airport, and may well be a solid 6 or 7 foot high fence line, although we obviously hope it will be a metal grid style one that will allow a continued view through to the airfield.

Once the development is completed, the current tenants will be moved out and into the new buildings, and the existing buildings demolished to make room for an eventual car park adjacent to the site of the anticipated hotel, assuming planning consent is given.

PILOTS PALS CLUB

The club is well established now as a members only club, with just over 400 paid members. Because of the special concessions available to cardholding members at the air show, it has been necessary to close the doors to new members, unless applicants fall into much more restricted categories.

From now, and until 5th June (ie. after the air fair), membership applications will only be accepted where they are proposed by an existing member (who is saying they personally know the applicant and recommend them for membership), and seconded by another who feels the applicant is right for the club. No one will be accepted unless they are either:

- 1) CURRENT members of an existing flying Club, Group, or Training organisation based at Biggin Hill Airport.

- 2) CURRENT employees or members of staff of a company or organisation based within the Biggin Hill Airport exterior boundary.
- 3) CURRENT registered owners of an aircraft that is permanently based at Biggin Hill Airport.
- 4) The Wife, long term partner, or dependent child under 18, of an existing (or acceptable new) Pilots Pals Club member (proof will be sought in all cases)

ALL other applications or those with inadequate proof will be rejected and the fee returned.

The only exceptions to this temporary Club Rules Amendment will be in cases where all six members of the Club Committee, for whatever reason, each sign the application agreeing to the membership being granted as an exception. (This will only be used where appropriate to allow regular Biggin Hill Airport users from times past to be considered for membership)

More concessions have now been added to photo membership cardholding members:

The "Spitfire Cafe" in Main Road Biggin Hill has agreed that anyone presenting their photo membership with payment for their meals (including breakfast's and Lunches) at any time will receive a 10% discount from their total bill. This has been agreed in writing with the Cafe's owner.

The "Flight Service Station" garage in Main Road Biggin Hill has agreed that anyone presenting their photo membership card with payment for work on their car will receive a 10% discount from their total bill (This includes both parts and labour charges) - Additionally, there will be a discount of 5% against the purchase price of any vehicle from the garage. This has been agreed in writing with the owner and Club Member, Derek Hillier, who asks that members mention the club membership on booking in their vehicle for any work. (01959 570310)

The "Crest Partnership" accountants in Main Road Biggin Hill has agreed that anyone presenting their photo membership card with payment for any services will receive a 15% discount from their total bill. The firm offers the self employed, and small to medium businesses, a complete range of accountancy services, including: Accounts, Tax Returns, Payroll, VAT, CIS Calculations, and are specialists in raising Business Finance. The discount has been agreed in writing with Partner and Club Member, Paul Castle. (01959 570686)

"Lee's Barbers" mens hairdressers Opposite the old RAF camp entrance at Biggin Hill has agreed that anyone showing their photo membership card when paying will receive a 10% discount (but with a minimum of £1) from the bill.

So - current concessions for card-holding members are:
Air Fair entry to this year's June show (2nd and 3rd)- plus ability to buy

further tickets at special prices through the club.

Discounts at four Montien Thai Restaurants at various locations, the Grasshopper Inn restaurant and carvery and the Napolie Italian Restaurant, both in Westerham, the Bengal Butler Indian Restaurant and the Pheonix on the Hill Chinese Restaurant in Biggin Hill, and the Shoulder of Mutton Inn and Restaurant in the North of England. Plus the recently added Discounts at the Spitfire Café, the Flight Service Station for car repairs and purchases, accountancy services at Crest Partnership, and cheaper male hairdressing from Lee's Barbers.

(see full details of all offers on the concession page of the website at <http://www.pilotspals.co.uk>)

Members of the club are reminded that the facilities are only available for them and their guests - guests MUST always be signed in on every single occasion (preferably before being asked!) and the guest fee paid. Guests are the responsibility of the person signing them in, and guests must NEVER buy drinks at the bar. The facility is there to allow people to bring in friends - not as a method of bypassing club membership.

In view of the likely lack of external space (see South Camp Development article above), members only will be permitted entry at the time of the Air Fair (commercial arrangement with ADI will provide ADI staff and air and ground crews temporary bar membership for the show period only, in addition to our own members). NO NON-MEMBERS WILL BE ADMITTED ON THE SATURDAY OR SUNDAY, and the door will be manned at all times. Members will be limited to a maximum of one "guest" each during the show period. If the development goes ahead, there will not be any grass areas available for picnics etc..... Remember though, your membership cards will allow you free entry to the show ground itself.

That's it - more later on the Air Show and development plans etc.

John Willis
Biggin Hill Airport Users Database