

Hi everyone

Welcome to the April 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.

You are reminded that for Database subscribing members, even if your Newsletter doesn't arrive by email at the beginning of the month, 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!)

MARCH WEATHER

Well, at last, flyable weather has returned after such a long time with consistently poor weather for several months preventing much Light Aviation. I actually think it's improved because I went away on holiday this month, and almost instantly the weather in the UK became completely beautiful for flying!

(I should have expected that as, every time I go away, the UK weather improves so I miss out on flying myself.....)

So, let's hope that, in spite of the current threats of snow in Kent as I write this, the Spring weather is now here for the rest of the Spring and Summer and we can get lots of flying again...

MILES SAGGERS

Sadly we all received contact via old Biggin Hill'ite, Melissa Saggars, that her twin brother of 42 years, Miles, passed away peacefully on the night of 25th March following a very short, but courageous battle with cancer.

Miles worked for Singh Bamrah at Falcon Aircraft Services hangar on the East side of the airport. A lovely man, always such a happy, smiling, chap – always very friendly to everyone who visited the hangar. Loved by all who knew him, he will be sorely missed by us all..

Details of the funeral will follow in due course for those who would like to attend to show your respects...

Rest in Peace Miles, your old friends will never forget you.....

Miles' name has been added to the Roll of Honour on the BigginHillReunited.co.uk website.

RAY GIBSON

As many of you old Biggin Hill'ites will undoubtedly recall – last year our old friend, Ray Gibson (known as Captain Concrete as he flew for many years several aircraft owned by Ready Mixed Concrete!) sadly passed away.

This month we were fortunate to hear form his daughter, Victoria, on the Biggin Hill Reunited Group on Facebook. I felt it made total sense to include her posting on here for the benefit of those Biggin Hill'ites who do not use Social Media such as Facebook.....

QUOTE.....

Dear old friends and colleagues of, "CAPTAIN CONCRETE", Ray Gibson, the RMC pilot based at Biggin in the 80's. As you may know, my father sadly passed away last year.

I am holding a memorial celebration of my father's life. This will be on Saturday 30th July 2022, at 2.30pm. East Grinstead. All are welcome to join us.

Please feel free to forward this invitation on. Unfortunately, I have no address book for Ray, to invite you all personally. For more details, please do, message me.

Kindest thoughts,
Victoria Gibson
.....UNQUOTE

If you want to send Victoria a message, please feel free to message her via the BigginHillReunited Facebook Group – or feel free to email your message to me (john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk) marked for Victoria's attention, and I will forward it to Victoria on your behalf.....

AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

As we have written in several previous newsletters, there is much new development taking place at the airport these days...

The new Landings Hotel near to the South camp entrance by the roundabout is progressing very quickly and certainly appears to be very much on target for the planned opening in November/December this year.

The huge new Bombardier hangar and complex in the centre of the airport adjacent to the self-refuelling area is looking very much complete with it's planned opening in April/May looking very much on schedule.

As we have mentioned before, the planned improvement and extension to the South Camp entrance road, from the roundabout entrance right around to the Heritage Hangar and Alouette, has commenced in the last week or so. The full resurfacing of the road is planned to be carried out overnight commencing early in the week around 5th or 6th, so airport users need to be aware that night-time access to everywhere on the south and east camp areas will be very restricted while this is happening...

APRIL BIGGIN HILL POSTED FUEL PRICES

The "posted" Biggin Hill Airport fuel prices, excluding VAT, for the calendar month of April 2022 are:

£2:07.5 per litre for 100LL Avgas if supplied from the Fuel Bowser (if uplifted using fuel account card Only from the Self-Refuel pumps = minus 5p per litre)

£1:01.2 per litre for Jet A1

SPECIAL NOTES: Users are advised that credit and debit cards can no longer be used at the self-refuel pumps. If you use self-refuelling, you will need your airport H-TEC fuel account card with you when you go there. (if you haven't got one with you, you will have to go over to the Main Terminal apron to uplift fuel from the bowsers instead).

THE LOOKOUT CAFE

By the time you read this, the Lookout Café by the main entrance to the south camp will be back open after a two-year Covid break! Initially the opening hours will be 8am - 5pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

There are some new additions to the menu too, including:

Made to order pizza from our brand new pizza oven, Fresh, hot and crispy jacket potatoes with a variety of fillings, An array of sweet/savoury pastries, Costa Coffee and a range of different teas. Plus lots of your usual 'Lookout' favourites!

The intention is to extend the opening back to 7 days a week (in the near future). The staff look forward to welcoming everyone back to the Lookout

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CLUBS, BUSINESSES & OTHER AIRPORT USER

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

Spring has sprung; the daffodils are in bloom, the birds are singing, aeroplanes are once again joining them amongst the fluffy scattered clouds, and it is forecast to snow this week. However, despite the haze, the past month has had some glorious sunshine. I think the message of this little sermon is to take to the skies when you can! Good ol' British weather!

Aside from gossiping about high pressure systems and returning polar maritime air masses over cups of tea like a bunch of sky-gazing washer women, it has been a reasonably productive month over at Alouette Towers. Our students are all making good progress, despite the insanity of the CAA e-exam system and one of our members is planning a jaunt around France in our well-equipped PA-28.

We also had a well-attended social evening - it was fantastic to see so many people having a drink and a catch up. Due to the road resurfacing work at Biggin we have had to rearrange our next social, which in a break from the traditional first Wednesday, will in fact be held on Monday 4th April from 19:30. You are all very welcome to come along and, if you are not already members, join for free as Associate/Social members of the club.

I wish you all the best and hope to see many of you at the Alouette social evening (details above).

That's all from me so, until next month, enjoy your flying.

Stuart Taylor
Club Chairman

MONTHLY NEWS FROM THE CEO'S OFFICE

The irony hasn't escaped me that as the government continues to stress their current policy of 'living with COVID', that the policy has become a literal one for me personally. As I type this CEO's update, I am in fact off work with COVID and, despite being fully vaccinated, I continue to struggle to shake it off. Additionally, we continue to watch in horror as the human tragedy in Ukraine continues and we pray that sense will prevail and that the peace talks will be successful.

The outlook for Business Aviation and the Airport remains cautiously optimistic. The challenges regarding assessing the impact of global events remains despite the industries resilience and adaptability. Traffic levels throughout March were again strong and the Airport continues to see a strong bounce back across Europe. The unseasonably mild weather has helped considerably resulting a strong end to the financial year.

The Airport continues its ambitious investment programme and development continue at pace. I am delighted to announce that the Bombardier Hangar achieved practical completion on 15th March and over the next few months Bombardiers operations will transfer from Hangar 510 to the new facility. The Landing Hotel development continues to move quickly and the community can see first-hand how

the Hotel is taking shape. The opening of the Hotel is planned for Nov/Dec this year. The Airport continues to invest in Churchill way and many of you will have seen these works progress throughout March. Finally, the Airport continues to work with the CAA regarding the 03 RNAV approach approval and the progression of the Air Space Change for the 21 RNAV overlay.

I am also delighted to confirm the reopening of the Lookout and would strongly encourage everyone to try out some of the new offerings including jacket potatoes and pizza.

Cheers
David Winstanley

As we have left out the “and Finally” Jokes section again this month, I believe that the best joke we could carry anyway is a description of the Russian “invasion” or “Specialist Military Operation” – otherwise more sensibly called the “War” – so here follows that joke...

THE WAR IN UKRAINE

I can't believe we are into the second month of this completely unnecessary “war” (not a “special military operation” that Putin calls it!!) started by the Russian power crazed Dictator against the independent and democratic country of Ukraine. Putin would appear to have attacked Ukraine simply because he wants total control over another democratic country that doesn't want to be a part of his Dictatorship. Funnily enough, I seem to recall another complete psycho like him in the late 30's and early 40's who had a similar approach to such issues.....

I believe that we in the west need to do everything we can to help the Ukrainian people to retain their own country, free of this Russian psycho. The west also needs to do everything possible to help all the displaced women and children who have fled the war zone as refugees, sadly having to leave their menfolk behind defending their home country from the Russian aggressors to enable their families to return home....

And to those millions of ordinary people back in Russia who do not agree with their self-appointed leader's actions, but are scared to say or show they disagree with him, there will probably come a time when they will need to rise up and force him out of their country and do everything they can to return it to a civilised non-Dictatorship that many of them probably favour but are frightened to express...

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 in the past) please let me know or tell them about us – Database membership is, of course, free.

That's it for this month. Enjoy your flying - Please stay well and stay safe.....

John Willis

Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

The normal “And Finally” section has been withheld again this month for the reasons previously described. Our hearts and thoughts are with the Ukrainian people.

This very popular section will return as soon as we feel it is appropriate and accept it....