

Hi everyone

Welcome to the August 2013 Biggin Hill Users Database Newsletter.... (sent to you this month from sunny Portugal..)

JB's August edition of the Biggin Hill Airport "BUGLE" is now available online on the Social Club's website at <http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk> As always it is NOT included here - to view it, once in the Bugle section, via the link on the homepage, click on the appropriate month's link – this will open it in a new browser window so you can read it or print it.

As always, please keep those stories coming in for inclusion in future issues. (JB's direct email address is johnbryan13@sky.com, or you can send items directly to me on john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk to pass on).

EMAIL ADDRESSES

Welcome to the new members of the Database who are receiving this regular Newsletter for the first time. Current member names can be seen at www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk using the link to the database members list.

If you ever change your email address, please remember to let me know (and also, please feel free to introduce new Biggin Hill'ites to the database).

CAN YOU HELP FIND A MISSING PILOT?

A fellow pilot has gone missing on a routine flight from Blackbushe Airport to Le Touquet.

Sascha Schornstein, the aircraft's only occupant, was flying a Cirrus SR22 on 21 July when it crashed into the English Channel some 15 miles from Dungeness. Search and Rescue was apparently launched when the aircraft became overdue. After finding some aircraft wreckage, the search effort was stood down after around 24 hours. The pilot has not, at the time of writing, been found.

See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-23495551> for more information.

His wife, Yulia Schornstein, and friends, are raising funds for a salvage and recovery operation of the pilot and aircraft. They have reached over half their £10,000 minimum and we on the database would like to help spread the word to fellow aviators.

If you would like to help her by donating to the fund, please visit their 'Justgiving' webpage:

<https://www.justgiving.com/local/project/findhim>

JOHN BRYAN'S BIRTHDAY

13th July saw a fantastic gathering of old Biggin Hill'ites in Westerham to celebrate our very own JB's 80th birthday. A bit like a mini-reunion, it was a great evening in the wonderful sunshine. JB's 'Bugle' this month has more on this party, together with lots of photos...

ANTHEMS IN THE PARK 2013

27th July saw Synergy Events unique 'Anthems in the Park 2013' at Royal Air Force College Cranwell, in Lincolnshire, where more than 4000 people attended the weather marred afternoon and evening concert.

Whilst the RAF Red Arrows and the Hawker Hunter did manage to impress the crowd with their displays overhead the impressive College Hall, unfortunately adverse weather prevented other displays by the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and the Blades aerobatic team.

On the musical side, stirring music from the RAF College Band entertained the crowd whilst narrator, broadcaster Michael Trabulsi, told the story of Bomber Command. During the interval, the loudest cheer of the event went to the Bomber Command veterans, the oldest of whom was 103, when they took to the stage.

Other performances included Jonathan and Charlotte from 'Britain's got Talent', and the Red Arrows Team Manager, Ruth Shackleton, who performed 'Jerusalem' before the Pomp and Circumstance march, which took place in the rain, echoed around the college grounds, but this didn't appear to dampen people's spirits. The Huge firework finale all but disappeared into the clouds, but this still managed to wow the crowd as the whole sky's colours constantly changed.

As always, congratulations to Colin and Fran, and their team, for an impressively organised event, which was in support of the RAF Benevolent fund.

“BEYOND THE BUMP”

As many of us will be aware, Joe Merchant (who gave us the excellent 'Pilots Pals' club for so many years), has been writing a book about the airport and airport people, principally its postwar period.

Joe has been keeping many of us up to date with progress via Facebook, but to keep all the non-Facebook members fully updated, I asked Joe to let us have an update for everyone...

Joe writes: “Having completed the draft of my book and then experiencing a little of the specific requirements of the publishing world together with the attendant legal problems I have decided to enlist professional assistance to edit the draft. An initial indication suggests a 20% rewrite.

Publisher's criticism centres on market requirements and retail price, i.e. too many images on too many pages. Whereas my independent survey of the requirements of friends gave a contrary indication.

The publisher's response was, and I quote, “What customers want is not what they are prepared to pay for.” Whilst I will endeavour to sensibly reduce the number of images, this will have little impact on the retail price.

Having researched the costs involved for the size of book and the quality of paper required for good reproduction of the images I am able to indicate a likely unit price of £28.00 plus P & P.

Though there is still a long road to travel before the book is ready for publication I feel confident that the journey will be completed.”

We wish Joe well in his endeavours to overcome these hurdles and get the book out there for us all. I know that many, including myself, have already placed provisional orders with Joe for the completed book. The ultimate sale will, however, be almost certainly handled by a distributor rather than Joe personally. Nevertheless, if anyone would like to contact Joe direct to show him support, his email is jvmerchant@telitec.com

JENNY MUNRO'S REPLACEMENT

The airport recently formally announced that Jenny's replacement has now been selected and will shortly be starting to work with her until she stands down in the Autumn. Her replacement as the

new airport MD will be well known to many of us – Will Curtis, formerly of Perfect Av, Rizonjet, Goldair, and many others.

My own opinion is that Will is an excellent choice for this challenging post, having worked in most fields of aviation, including Club and Training, air taxi and jet charter, as well as holding senior corporate positions in major aviation operations. The airport is lucky to have found such a person to fill Jenny's soon to be vacant post.

I'm sure the membership will wish to join me in welcoming Will and wishing him every success in his new post. We look forward to working with him and the Biggin Hill Airport management into the future.

STILL THINGS LEFT TO DO THIS SUMMER

Still some great events for us all this year:-

OLD HAY – SUMMER PARTY WEEKEND

10th and 11th August will see Old Hay Airfield, near Paddock Wood in Kent open its doors once again for its two day Summer Party starting from midday on the 10th. Full details in last month's Newsletter.

MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO "THE FEW"

17th August – one night only – a unique musical and flying event at Biggin Hill Airport. Especially for those that love the sight and sound of magnificent Merlin engines. Full details in last month's Newsletter and Synergy Events website <http://www.synergieventsuk.com>

EMPIRE AIR DAY – RAF KENLEY

7th and 8th September – RAF Kenley's weekend event celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the 1938 Empire Air Day.

Full details in last month's Newsletter (including how to get discounted tickets) and an up to date programme can be found on the website at <http://kenleyairshow.co.uk>

MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF JENNY MUNRO

I am glad to now be able to support the notification sent out to staff, tenants and users of Biggin Hill Airport by our Chairman last week, that Will Curtis, currently of Perfect Aviation, will be taking over from me as Managing Director. Will's transfer date has not yet been confirmed, but we are confident that we can effect a smooth transition for everyone who works with and is in regular contact with this office, as well as customers of the Airport. The more seamless the changeover, the more successful it will have been! Already being known at Biggin Hill means that we are aware of lots of discussion about Will's appointment – but this is only to be expected. Having had the chance to discuss the role in some detail with Will already, I can say without doubt that it would be almost impossible to find anyone more committed to this Airport, the people on and around it, and its success in the long term.

While we await Will's transfer, it is business as usual for us with no let-up in the courting of new business and ongoing management of the field. The only personal exception to this is next week, when I take a few days out to get married. I am then looking forward to my last couple of months here and still have a list of things I would like to achieve before finishing!

We are all looking forward to the Musical Salute to The Few, which the Heritage Hangar is organising on 17th August. If anyone still means to buy tickets, this would be a good time to do it! I

am really pleased that the RAF Benevolent Fund and the Chartwell Cancer Trust – the charities which our own staff voted to support this year - have both been included as beneficiaries of the event, each in their own way. A few words follow from the Chartwell Cancer Trust, for anyone interested in supporting them through purchasing their tickets for this event, which I understand include refreshments in a dedicated hospitality area:

"Biggin Hill Airport have been supporting The RAF Benevolent Fund and a local Charity The Chartwell Cancer Trust throughout the year. The Chartwell Cancer Trust supports the cancer and leukaemia unit in The Princess Royal University Hospital in Farnborough, Kent.

The Charity pays the salaries of two Health Care Assistants and a senior Haematologist practising in the Unit. The Charity is also responsible for the appointment of a permanent junior doctor and has recently confirmed funding for a Benefit Claims Expert to assist patients who face financial difficulties while receiving treatment. The Trust makes a real difference to the Unit and we are glad to have extended our support.

The Trust have a few corporate tickets left for the Biggin Hill Heritage Concert "A Musical Salute to the Few" on 17th August. Please call on 01959 570322 if you are interested."

Jenny Munro
MD – Biggin Hill Airport Ltd

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB

Thanks again for all that have renewed again for 2013. Your support is much appreciated
Full details can be found at www.bigginhillclub.co.uk

That's it for this month, except to say – I'm sure you would all like me to extend our very best wishes to Jenny for her forthcoming marriage – Good Luck and have a wonderful and very special day...

John Willis
Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

(And Finally: an amusing little ditty, followed by a couple of clean aviation stories. Thanks, as always, to everyone for sending their contributions....)

QUOTE.....
The Talking Centipede

A single guy decided life would be more fun if he had a pet.

So he went to the pet store and told the owner that he wanted to buy an unusual pet.

After some discussion, he finally bought a talking centipede, (100-legged bug), which came in a little white box to use for his house.

He took the box back home, found a good spot for the box, and decided he would start off by taking his new pet to church with him.

So he asked the centipede in the box, "Would you like to go to church with me today? We will have a good time."

But there was no answer from his new pet.

This bothered him a bit, but he waited a few minutes and then asked again, "How about going to church with me and receive blessings?"

But again, there was no answer from his new friend.

So he waited a few minutes more, thinking about the situation.

The guy decided to invite the centipede one last time.

This time he put his face up against the centipede's house and shouted,

"Hey, in there!

Would you like

to

go to

church with me

and learn about God?"

This time, a little voice came out of the box,

"I heard you the first time!

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I'm putting my shoes on!"

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

During a commercial airline flight an experienced Air Force Pilot was seated next to a young mother with a babe in arms. When the baby began crying during the descent for landing, the mother began nursing the infant as discreetly as possible.

The pilot pretended not to notice, and, upon disembarking, he gallantly offered his assistance to help with the various baby-related items.

When the young mother expressed her gratitude, the pilot responded, "Gosh, that's a good looking baby, and he sure was hungry!"

Somewhat embarrassed, the mother explained that her paediatrician said that the time spent on the breast would help alleviate the pressure in the baby's ears.

The Air Force Pilot sadly shook his head, and in true pilot fashion exclaimed, "And all these years, I've been chewing gum!"

.....UNQUOTE

And now an interesting flying story – wouldn't we all like to have done this.....!

QUOTE.....

SR-71 Blackbird Communication to Tower

Written by Brian Schul - former sled (SR-71 Blackbird) driver.

There were a lot of things we couldn't do in an SR-71, but we were the fastest guys on the block and loved reminding our fellow aviators of this fact. People often asked us if, because of this fact, it was fun to fly the jet. Fun would not be the first word I would use to describe flying this plane-intense, maybe, even cerebral. But there was one day in our Sled experience when we would have to say that it was pure fun to be the fastest guys out there, at least for a moment.

It occurred when Walt and I were flying our final training sortie. We needed 100 hours in the jet to complete our training and attain Mission Ready status. Somewhere over Colorado we had passed the century mark. We had made the turn in Arizona and the jet was performing flawlessly. My gauges were wired in the front seat and we were starting to feel pretty good about ourselves, not only because we would soon be flying real missions but because we had gained a great deal of confidence in the plane in the past ten months. Ripping across the barren deserts 80,000 feet below us, I could already see the coast of California from the Arizona border. I was, finally, after many humbling months of simulators and study, ahead of the jet.

I was beginning to feel a bit sorry for Walter in the back seat. There he was, with no really good view of the incredible sights before us, tasked with monitoring four different radios. This was good practice for him for when we began flying real missions, when a priority transmission from headquarters could be vital. It had been difficult, too, for me to relinquish control of the radios, as during my entire flying career I had controlled my own transmissions. But it was part of the division of duties in this plane and I had adjusted to it. I still insisted on talking on the radio while we were on the ground, however. Walt was so good at many things, but he couldn't match my expertise at sounding smooth on the radios, a skill that had been honed sharply with years in fighter squadrons where the slightest radio miscue was grounds for beheading. He understood that and allowed me that luxury. Just to get a sense of what Walt had to contend with, I pulled the radio toggle switches and monitored the frequencies along with him. The predominant radio chatter was from Los Angeles Center, far below us, controlling daily traffic in their sector. While they had us on their

scope (albeit briefly), we were in uncontrolled airspace and normally would not talk to them unless we needed to descend into their airspace.

We listened as the shaky voice of a lone Cessna pilot who asked Center for a read-out of his ground speed. Center replied: "November Charlie 175, I'm showing you at ninety knots on the ground." Now the thing to understand about Center controllers, was that whether they were talking to a rookie pilot in a Cessna, or to Air Force One, they always spoke in the exact same, calm, deep, professional tone that made one feel important. I referred to it as the "Houston Center voice." I have always felt that after years of seeing documentaries on this country's space program and listening to the calm and distinct voice of the Houston controllers, that all other controllers since then wanted to sound like that and that they basically did. And it didn't matter what sector of the country we would be flying in, it always seemed like the same guy was talking. Over the years that tone of voice had become somewhat of a comforting sound to pilots everywhere. Conversely, over the years, pilots always wanted to ensure that, when transmitting, they sounded like Chuck Yeager, or at least like John Wayne. Better to die than sound bad on the radios.

Just moments after the Cessna's inquiry, a Twin Beech piped up on frequency, in a rather superior tone, asking for his ground speed in Beech. "I have you at one hundred and twenty-five knots of ground speed." Boy, I thought, the Beechcraft really must think he is dazzling his Cessna brethren.

Then out of the blue, a navy F-18 pilot out of NAS Lemoore came up on frequency. You knew right away it was a Navy jock because he sounded very cool on the radios. "Center, Dusty 52 ground speed check." Before Center could reply, I'm thinking to myself, hey, Dusty 52 has a ground speed indicator in that million-dollar cockpit, so why is he asking Center for a read-out? Then I got it, ol' Dusty here is making sure that every bug smasher from Mount Whitney to the Mojave knows what true speed is. He's the fastest dude in the valley today, and he just wants everyone to know how much fun he is having in his new Hornet. And the reply, always with that same, calm, voice, with more distinct alliteration than emotion: "Dusty 52, Center, we have you at 620 on the ground." And I thought to myself, is this a ripe situation, or what? As my hand instinctively reached for the mic button, I had to remind myself that Walt was in control of the radios. Still, I thought, it must be done-in mere seconds we'll be out of the sector and the opportunity will be lost. That Hornet must die, and die now. I thought about all of our Sim training and how important it was that we developed well as a crew and knew that to jump in on the radios now would destroy the integrity of all that we had worked toward becoming. I was torn.

Somewhere, 13 miles above Arizona, there was a pilot screaming inside his space helmet. Then, I heard it-the click of the mic button from the back seat. That was the very moment that I knew Walter and I had become a crew. Very professionally, and with no emotion, Walter spoke: "Los Angeles Center, Aspen 20, can you give us a ground speed check?" There was no hesitation, and the replay came as if was an everyday request.

"Aspen 20, I show you at one thousand eight hundred and forty-two knots, across the ground." I think it was the forty-two knots that I liked the best, so accurate and proud was Center to deliver that information without hesitation, and you just knew he was smiling. But the precise point at which I knew that Walt and I were going to be really good friends for a long time was when he keyed the mic once again to say, in his most fighter-pilot-like voice: "Ah, Center, much thanks, we're showing closer to nineteen hundred on the money."

For a moment Walter was a god. And we finally heard a little crack in the armour of the Houston Center voice, when L.A. came back with, "Roger that Aspen. Your equipment is probably more accurate than ours. You boys have a good one." It all had lasted for just moments, but in that short, memorable sprint across the southwest, the Navy had been flamed, all mortal airplanes on freq were forced to bow before the King of Speed, and more importantly, Walter and I had crossed the threshold of being a crew. A fine day's work.

We never heard another transmission on that frequency all the way to the coast. For just one day, it truly was fun being the fastest guys out there.

.....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"...))