

Hi everyone

Welcome to the February Biggin Hill Users Database Newsletter... The February edition of the Biggin Hill Airport "BUGLE" by John Bryan is also available for viewing/downloading on the Social Club's website at <http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk>

Please remember to send JB any stories of interest, and photos, for inclusion in future issues. It's your newsletter so please help JB to keep it coming... (his direct email address is [johnbryan@jbplstd.demon.co.uk](mailto:johnbryan@jbplstd.demon.co.uk), or you can send items directly to me to pass on)

#### EMAIL ADDRESS UPDATES AND ADDITIONS

Keep passing those new and amended email addresses to me. Welcome to those that have recently added their names to the database.... For current member names see <http://www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk> and go to the link to the database membership..

#### NORMAN KARLEY

It has been pointed out to me by one of our members that we seemed to have missed the passing of this old Biggin Hill'ite last year. He has now been added to the Roll of Honour..

NORMAN (Wrong Way) KARLEY passed away on 19 January 2009, leaving a wife, Audrey, and a daughter, Janet and son, Peter.

He joined the Flairavia Flying Club in the late 1960's, eventually gaining his nickname as a result of his first solo cross country one Sunday Summer's afternoon. Apparently, Norman set off from Biggin to Stapleford in a Champion Tri-Traveller (G-ARAP). He was to follow a compass heading of 015. Unfortunately it seems Norman didn't read the compass too well, put the '0' in the wrong place, and proceeded on a heading of 150.

At the time calculated for arrival at Stapleford he couldn't find the airfield and flew around the area for a further 10-15 minutes searching... but to no avail. Eventually he gave up and, not losing his cool we are told, finished his flight by doing an emergency landing in a farmer's field from where he phoned the club and was later rescued. Needless to say, he was ribbed mercilessly from then on and the nickname stuck!

Being quite an exuberant character, Norman was also well known amongst the ladies (young & old alike) at the various flying club parties for his extreme agility on the dance floor... especially when 'Bill Hayley & The Comets' music was played. Many a lady was vaulted, by him, over his head during his dance routine... an experience they would never forget!

#### BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB LTD

An excellent response in the end to the requests for membership renewals. JB and I do really appreciate your show of support. The fees help to pay for both the production of the photo membership cards, and for the webspace and bandwidth for both the club site and the reunion sites..

Anyone still wishing to renew (membership remains open), please send your renewal fee (£10 for single, £15 for a couple, and £20 for a family) payable to "Biggin Hill Airport Social Club Ltd" to the postal address on the website, please enclose a Stamped Addressed Envelope (SAE) for return of the card(s). If you have sent in your renewal, but have not received your card(s), please call me

Any past or present Biggin Hill'ites wishing to join should complete the form on the club site at [www.bigginhillclub.co.uk](http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk) and follow the instructions shown there..

For details of current concessions available to members, please go to <http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk> and follow the “concessions” link on the homepage.

## BIGGIN HILL REUNION SITE AND DATABASE

Just as a reminder for new members, you can see a list of current email database members on the Reunion website at <http://www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk>

There is also a link to the Biggin Hill “Roll of Honour” on the reunion homepage.

If anyone has the name and email address of anyone you believe should be a database member, please let me know so they can be contacted. Similarly, if you know of anyone who is no longer with us, and was a past Biggin Hill Airport user but is not included on the “Roll of Honour”, please let me know...

## THE AIRPORT

I feel a comment is appropriate here to congratulate the airport management and staff regarding their actions during the recent period of heavy snow at Biggin. It was fantastic to hear that there was a point when Biggin Hill was one of only two airports open for air traffic in the SouthEast, with Heathrow I believe being the only other. Several other airports that claim to be major airports covering the capital were closed for much of the day on more than one occasion.

That's showing them!

Well done to all concerned – you should be very proud of the achievements in such adverse conditions..

That's about it for this month...

John Willis  
Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

(And Finally:

The following was forwarded to me by a database member. Not sure how true it all is, but it sounds probable, and is certainly amusing as well as educational....

QUOTE.....

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here is some trivia about the 1500's:-

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, “Don't throw the baby out with the bath water”..

Houses had thatched roofs - thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying “It's raining cats and dogs”.

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, "Dirt poor".

The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance way. Hence the saying, "a thresh hold".

(Getting quite an education, aren't you?)

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old"...

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could "bring home the bacon".

They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat"..

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or the "upper crust".

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of "holding a wake".

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night – "the graveyard shift" - to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell", or was considered "a dead ringer".

And that's apparently the truth....Now, whoever said history is boring !!!

.....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 unusual and interesting stories or anecdotes that you feel may interest our readers, please email them to me as a possible inclusion in a monthly "and Finally"...)