

Hi everyone

Welcome to the June 2012 Biggin Hill Users Database Newsletter.

The May edition of the Biggin Hill Airport "BUGLE" by John Bryan is also available online on the Social Club's website at <http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk> ... It is not included here - to view the Bugle you need to go to the club website and click on the link on the homepage – when you get to the Bugle section, you need to then click on the June 2012 edition 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](mailto:johnbryan13@sky.com), or you can send items directly to me to pass on).

## **EMAIL ADDRESSES**

Welcome to the new members of the Database who are receiving this regular Newsletter for the first time.. For current member names see [www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk](http://www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk) and go to the link to the database members list..

Please let us know if you change your email address at any time – and if you know anyone else who has been involved on the airport, please pass me their details so they can be added to the database.

## **THE GEORGE DOBSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

For the benefit of the hundreds of friends of George Dobson who kindly donated money to the memorial fund at his funeral, the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators (GAPAN) have announced the winner of the George Dobson Memorial Scholarship 2012.

The scholarship to enable her to complete the full PPL to licence issue has been awarded to Megan Foley from Epsom Downs, who is currently studying Geography at St Andrews University, Fife. She works hard at a bakery in St Andrews to help fund her time at university and since 2009 has been a VRT officer with the East of Scotland Universities Air Squadron based at RAF Leuchars ... in university holidays she has raised funds for herself working as a chef. This year, however, she is remaining in Scotland during the summer to complete her flying training.

She joined the Air Cadets at 13 and attained the rank of Cadet Warrant Officer before going on to University.

On announcing the award, the Guild told George's family, "We especially like Megan for her long term aims – she intends to be a flight instructor and a Geographical Survey Pilot; slightly more quirky that the "I want to be an airline pilot" which is the usual clarion call. She is a natural teacher – and holds international ski teaching accreditation and has taught in both Canada and New Zealand.

We thought that as it is her stated ambition to give something back to Flying and pass on her skills from the very start of her aviation career that she may well be someone your Uncle could have related to. I hope he would have approved; and I very much hope that you and all the people who contributed to this scholarship in memory of George Dobson will not only approve, but will have the chance to meet Megan at some stage in her flying career."

We are sure that George would have been very proud of this award and hope you all agree that your donations have been very appropriately used with this award.

## **ANOTHER BIGGIN HILL AIRSHOW??**

Rumours abound everywhere that the Air Fair is coming back.

The reality is that a feasibility study is being carried out by the airport regarding the possibility of re-introducing an "air event" in 2013. It will not be in the identical format as previous shows, if indeed it is decided to introduce an air show again.

In order to help with this study, Colin Hitchins, formerly Chief Executive of Air Displays International, who ran the annual Air Fairs, and now MD of Synergy Events, has been asked to solicit views from airport users and businesses about the airport and air shows.

Many of you expressed dismay at the cancellation of our annual air shows at Biggin Hill, so this is your opportunity to participate in the study. A questionnaire has been prepared that is designed to gain opinions from both businesses/tenants and also airport users of all categories, club members and private owners or regular users, so not every question will be appropriate for everyone to answer. Just answer those that you feel are relevant to you. The questionnaire can be found at <http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk/airshowstudy.pdf>

Based upon the literally dozens of comments I have been receiving from database members over the last couple of years asking when there was going to be another air show, most people seem to be very keen to see something again at the airport. We all know shows cannot be put on without some inconvenience to users, but most have expressed comments that a spectacular air show justified such inconveniences once a year. This study is important so that the airport can get a balanced view of users opinions. Please try not to use it to simply say you want free entry tickets (that really is irrelevant), as that will waste the opportunity to get an air show back on the calendar for the benefit of all users, local residents, and the general public alike.

The study was scheduled to end on 1<sup>st</sup> June, but has been extended to 7<sup>th</sup> June especially to allow members of the database to participate. Please make sure you have your say in time..

Colin says, "This questionnaire is designed to collect evidence to be used in the planning of an aviation event at Biggin Hill Airport in 2013. It should be approached from a tenant or user of BHAL point of view. The data will not be published however it will be shared within the BHAL management team during the planning of any future event."

This could be your last chance to get an air show back to our airport...

Please email your completed response to [colin@synergieventsuk.com](mailto:colin@synergieventsuk.com) or by post to Synergy Events Ltd, 9 Swan Close Orpington, Kent BR5 2NA – in either case to be there no later than 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

## **FRANK GARLAND**

It is with regret that I have to announce the recent death of another old friend of Biggin Hill Airport. Frank Garland passed away on 26<sup>th</sup> May, with his wife Viv by his side in Hospital in Peterborough after a period of illness.

Frank will be known to many as a former member of Experimental Flying Group, and also as the owner of a Cherokee Warrior G-BCRL, which he based at Biggin Hill until it was sold about 10 years ago. He ran a business, Nordecs, in Croydon adjacent to the airport, and lived for many years in Biggin Hill before moving to Tunbridge Wells, then West Malling and finally Bourne in Lincolnshire.

His funeral will take place on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at 2pm at The Chapel, Plums Cemetery, off Wickham Lane, Abbey Wood, SE2 0NS, and afterwards at The Marriott Hotel in nearby Bexleyheath (1 Broadway, DA6 7JZ).

His wife has confirmed that any of Frank's old Biggin Hill friends and colleagues will be welcome at both the funeral, and afterwards. (Anybody wishing to send flowers can do so through Stephanie's, Bourne, Lincs 01778 421171 or, if preferred, can send a donation for the Leukaemia Fund C/O T.R. Carlton, 35b Abbey Road, Bourne, Lincs PE10 9EW)

### **MICHAEL JOYCE**

It is also with great sadness that I report the death of a personal friend, and old Biggin Hill'ite, Michael Joyce. Unfortunately Michael died last July and I have only just found out, when I tried to make arrangement to visit him.

Michael was a Public Relations man and ran a London Based PR company called M Joyce PR for many years. He had many well known clients, for example Securicor, and latterly Alan Sugar's Amstrad. (indeed Nick Hewer, who many will now know from BBC TV's "the Apprentice", was originally from that Company).

Michael was co-owner (with me) of one of the UK's first Air Taxi companies back in the late 60's, Southern Air Charter.

Michael was featured in the October 2007 edition (last page) of the Biggin Hill Bugle when he and his wife, Nicky, flew to Bembridge for a presentation as the ex-Commodore of a prestigious yacht club on the island.

Michael, who lived in a retirement home with his wife, suffered from an infection requiring an operation from which he was recovering in hospital, when his wife suffered from a fall and was admitted for observation overnight in the same hospital. Sadly she died that same night. Michael died just 17 days later.

A lovely man, and someone I will personally miss..

### **SO YOU THINK YOU'RE AN EXPERIENCED PILOT?**

The Telegraph reported on 26th May the death of Evelyn Johnson, aged 102. She was an aviatrix known as "Mama Bird" who made it into the Guinness Book of Records as having the most flying hours of any woman and the most of any living person.

At the time of her death, since learning to fly in 1944, she had recorded a staggering 57,635.4 flying hours during a 60-year career in mostly small aircraft. She served as a colonel in the US Civil Air Patrol, and became the oldest flight instructor in the world, continuing to teach until the age of 96.

According to Biggin Hill'ite Harry Harris' friend, 88 year old ex-Lancaster pilot and BA 747 Captain, even Evelyn Johnson's total hours were surpassed by Ed Long who flew more than 64,000 hours, and whose last words when he died in 1999 were supposed to have been "Don't let that woman beat me".

Makes all our efforts seem somewhat miniscule by comparison....

Full story at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/9290873/Evelyn-Johnson.html>

## **QUEEN'S JUBILEE CONCERT**

Loseley Park near Guildford will play host to the Royal Air Force for a Jubilee concert and flying display on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012 - a unique opportunity to spend an afternoon and evening with the RAF as they salute Her Majesty the Queen in her Diamond Jubilee year.

Not only will you be entertained for more than four and a half hours with a moving audio visual extravaganza featuring The Central Band of the Royal Air Force and the now famous Military Wives Choir, but the event will also include a dramatic one and a half hours of flying displays at this unique non-airport location. The displays will include:

The RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team

Representing the war years, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's Spitfire MkXIX.

The RAF's Tutor, Tucano, Hawk and King Air (representing the aircraft used to train today's RAF pilots).

The RAF Tornado GR4 whose role demonstration is designed to represent the tasks it undertakes in support of UK and NATO ground forces.

The Blades Aerobatic Display Team will open the show flying in the colours of the show's official charity the Royal Air Force Association.

As with all Synergy Events programmes, giant screens will display the action on stage and in the air for all to see. The concert will look back to those dark days of the Battle of Britain when a lone Spitfire pilot rammed a German bomber approaching Buckingham Palace, in which the Royal Family stayed, potentially saving the life of the young Princess Elizabeth, through to the work undertaken by Prince William today with the RAF Search and Rescue teams. The event will end with an uplifting patriotic finale.

For full details - see <http://www.synergieventsuk.com/>

## **MASSIVE RATES INCREASE FOR AIRPORT BUSINESSES**

On or about 11th May most airport tenants and businesses received a letter from the Rating Valuations Office informing them that the rateable value of their business premises was to be increased – BY ALMOST 100%!! Businesses were given until 12<sup>th</sup> June to make representations about this preposterous increase..

The Airport Authority was appalled by this and both Jenny Munro and Katie (Estates Manager) have been assisting Tenants in trying to stop this ridiculous and untimely increase. Have these idiots not heard of the recession or are they so wrapped up in their little world of relatively protected employment and gold plated pensions that they care little of the realities of life.

Singh Bamrah of Falcon, S&KFC, and EFG has been heading the opposition to these increases on behalf of many tenants, but he needs more proactive input from Tenants directly to help the case. Now is not the time for the typical Biggin Hill apathy to apply else it will be too late. Singh has already met with the local MP, Jo Johnson (who has even put a link to a press article about it on his own website at <http://www.jo-johnson.com> ), and has given several press interviews for articles slamming the Valuations Office for the manner that they have approached this. Jobs and businesses are on the line in some cases.. It is a disgrace that needs attacking. If you are in any way affected by these increases, PLEASE make sure you do everything in your power to make appropriate representations to anyone that you feel can help your case – local MP's, the Mayor of London, the Prime Minister's Office, local and national papers, etc..

If you need any further information or want to help, please call Singh on 01959 572339 or 01959 575923 or email him on [singhbam@aol.com](mailto:singhbam@aol.com)

## **MAY AT BIGGIN HILL - FROM THE OFFICE OF JENNY MUNRO**

I am glad to say that we at Biggin Hill Airport Ltd have arrived in the 21st century and we now Tweet! Our website has been relaunched ([www.bigginhillairport.com](http://www.bigginhillairport.com)) to provide better online services for the various types of traffic using the Airport. There are links from the website to our Facebook page and Twitter account. Please "like" us (if you do!) and "follow" us for all the up-to-date tweets and retweets. It's a whole new language - but the benefits are clear in terms of keeping in touch with our customers - and I hope you find it useful.

On a very serious note, and not wishing to duplicate too much of the main body of the newsletter, we are actively working on behalf of the businesses affected by the Rateable Value increase, to have this reversed. We have engaged our tried and tested consultant in this field, and this has already resulted in the businesses officially being advised that the RV hike is on hold pending these negotiations. Our MP, Jo Johnson has also been entirely supportive and I see that he has today written in the strongest terms to the powers that be. I am confident that with everyone rowing in the same direction, we can make headway on this.

There are two other very interesting pieces of work going on at the moment, which I would like to mention briefly. One is that Colin Hitchins of Synergy Events is conducting a feasibility study on our joint behalf, to assess the demand for and the possible content of a future Air Event at Biggin Hill. This is covered elsewhere in the newsletter, so my main request is to ask anyone wishing to contribute their thoughts on the matter to click on the link and take your chance to have your say - whatever it is!

The second item of interest is that I submitted a speculative, last minute proposal to the London Growth Fund for a very exciting project at Biggin Hill. To my great surprise and delight, they have asked to come and visit the Airport to assess our proposal further. Without going into too much detail at this stage, it would bring forward one of the [LoCATE@BigginHill](#) projects, lifting our involvement in training and apprenticeships. Regardless of the outcome of this funding application, I am glad to say that our Aviation Engineering Apprenticeship programme began on 14th May. I would like to thank Avalon Aero and Jet Aviation for committing to take the apprentices and we will be working to ensure that this grows steadily in the future.

Olympics bookings are building steadily - there has been some press coverage on the subject this week. Biggin is holding its own in the London market, and we are still bracing ourselves for the last minute rush which is a feature of this sector.

I hope this update is useful for you - please tweet or drop us a line via the website with any comments!

Jenny Munro  
MD – Biggin Hill Airport Ltd

## **UK CHANGEOVER TO EASA PILOTS LICENCES DELAYED**

The UK CAA had previously announced that the switchover to EASA Pilots Licences would occur on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012, after which no new JAR Licences or National Ratings would be issued.

They have now announced that, due to the complexity of the transition to the new licences, and the changes to requirements and infrastructure, that this date is no longer achievable. The new date is now 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012. This presumably also means that you have a little longer to add any licences or ratings to your old licence as well, as – for example – it will not be possible to add our National IMC rating to a licence after the transition date.

The deadlines, by which national commercial and private licences must be converted to EASA licences which are fixed in European legislation, remain as April 2014 and April 2015, respectively.

It would be wise to ensure that any licences or ratings held are kept fully validated during the changeover periods as it has been inferred that there will be a “use it or lose it” policy in the future.

### **BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB**

Thank you all for your continued financial support – the club membership fees do help to pay for the server space for the Bugle and this Newsletter and incidental expenses, so it is appreciated..

That’s it for this month..

John Willis

Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

(And Finally: Two amusing stories this month – the first from Ralph Scott, and the second from Brian Ward – thanks guys...

QUOTE.....

Over five thousand years ago Moses said to the children of Israel "pick up your shovel, mount your asses and camels, and I will lead you to the promised land."

Nearly 50 years ago, Harold Wilson said, "Lay down your shovels, sit on your asses, and light up a camel, this is the promised land."

Then Gordon Brown stole your shovel, taxed your asses, raised the price of camels, and mortgaged the promised land.

Now David Cameron has loaned my shovel to a third World country, (he hasn't realised yet that WE are now a third World country), raised my fuel bills, lent my money to a crowd of incompetent, greedy "merchant bankers" and increased VAT to 20%.

I got so depressed last night I called the Samaritans, they diverted my call to a call centre in Pakistan. I told them I was suicidal, they got all excited and asked if I could drive a truck.

.....UNQUOTE

And now a little ditty entitled - “Spell Checker”

QUOTE.....

Eye have a spelling chequer  
It came with my pea sea  
It plainly marques four my revue  
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea

Eye strike a quay and type a word  
And weight four it two say  
Weather eye am wrong oar write  
It shows me strait a weigh

As soon as a mist ache is maid  
It nose bee fore two long  
And eye can put the error rite  
It's rare lea ever wrong

Eye have run this poem threw it  
I'm shore yore pleased two no  
It's letter perfect awl the weigh  
My chequer tolled me sew

.....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"...) )