

Hi everyone

Welcome to the June 2020 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, even if you ever fail to receive your Newsletter by email, you can always view it online, as well as back copies of this Newsletter and also all the original Biggin Hill "Bugles" written by our own John Bryan (JB), 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!)

MAY WEATHER

Virtually the entire month of May has been CAVOK every day, but unfortunately very few people have been able to take advantage of it due to the Corona Virus restrictions on us all.

In the second half of the month, when the restrictions were slightly relaxed, a few airports started to re-open, and some solo light aircraft flying became possible.

Let's hope the light aviation restrictions do indeed become more relaxed during the month of June. If they are, let's hope that the weather continues to be as good as it has since the introduction of all the restrictions.

JUNE BIGGIN HILL POSTED FUEL PRICES

The "posted" Biggin Hill Airport fuel prices, excluding VAT, for the calendar month of June 2020 are:

£1.27 per litre for 100LL Avgas if supplied from the Fuel Bowser

(if uplifted using account card or credit card from the Self-Refuel pumps = minus 4p per litre)

£0.43 per litre for Jet A1

CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

As most airport users will be aware, May has been subject to very obvious restrictions for all forms of light aircraft "recreational flying", which the CAA initially made clear was not permitted at all (except for some special limited solo 30 minute engine maintenance flights where required by the manufacturer). As a result of this restriction, most general aviation airfields also closed.

During the course of May, the DfT and the CAA relaxed slightly the recreational flying restriction making it possible for Light Aircraft to be flown again – but with only a single pilot on board (except that family members living in the same home are permitted to also be on board). Other than for commercial flight crew revalidations which are permitted, no training flying is currently permitted yet.

Other than flights permitted under the above rules, the airport's flying clubs remained closed to prevent breaching the Social Distancing requirements or the DfT and CAA guidance.

Biggin Hill Airport has remained open as a Port of Entry for commercial flying and essential flights carrying such items as PPE for the NHS and other care facilities.

Hopefully, assuming things continue to improve and continue to show a consistent downward trend on hospital attendances and deaths from the virus, we will almost certainly see a relaxation of the

current restrictions, but these relaxations are likely to remain relatively slow. It thought highly unlikely that things will suddenly revert completely to pre-virus normality.

“COBBY” INJURED

Biggin Hill's very own oldie, “Cobby”, suffered a fall in his hangar about a week ago, injuring himself sufficiently that he was unable to get up un-assisted. Fortunately his predicament was discovered by one of Biggin Hill Airport's security staff, and Cobby was taken by ambulance to hospital.

Other than hearing he had injured his hip, we haven't heard how his recovery is going, but we would obviously wish him all the very best, and look forward to seeing him back at the airport soon...

PETER HORTON

It was with great sadness that we heard of the sad passing of another old Biggin Hill'ite, Peter Horton, on 1st May this year at age 75. He apparently contracted coronavirus, from which he didn't recover

Peter was a former British Airways Concorde pilot, with more than 9,000 hours on type. Additionally after leaving BA, he was a pilot with Goldair at Biggin Hill for some years.

A keen sailor too, he was well known for breaking many records in Concorde as a BA Captain, including celebrating the Millennium twice in one night, and taking the plane on a 'round the world' experience, including a non-stop flight from South America to New Zealand at twice the speed of sound. One of his closest personal memories included flying the Queen to Ottawa, Canada, on a state visit while he was commander of the royal flight.

A devoted family man, who lived in St Olave's, he is survived by his wife, Judith, his daughter, Carrie, and his son Paul and their families who all live in America.

Peter was well respected by all who knew him, and will be missed by his many aviation and sailing friends.

His name has been added to the Biggin Hill Reunited Roll of Honour. R.I.P. Peter

Lt Cdr PETER SHEPPARD AFC RN

We received notice of the sad passing of Lt Cdr Peter Sheppard AFC RN, who died on 6th February. Known to many at Biggin Hill, for his amazing Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm displays at the Biggin Hill Air Fair's over many years.

Peter was a Korean War Sea Fury pilot who would later go on to fly the Sea Vixen amongst many other types. He is probably most well known for being one of the founding members of the Royal Navy Historic Flight and many will remember his legendary Sea Fury displays.

His funeral was held on 27th February at Barnstable Crematorium

A great character, he will be missed by many, particularly by those who remember him on the air display circuit. R.I.P. Peter

JOHN WILKINS

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of another old Biggin Hill'ite, John Wilkins, who at age 85 died peacefully on 15th May following a short illness.

John, along with Peter Jackson, Dave Wilding and several others apparently attended night school to learn PPL flight theory in the mid-1960s. It is thought that John did his flight training at South London Aero Club at Biggin. Although he hadn't flown for a number of years, he had endless energy and remained active in his property company and was also a keen golfer, skier and bridge player right up to the time he became ill.

Unfortunately, due to the lockdown, only immediate family are able to attend his burial service.

He will be missed by his many friends from those early days of Biggin Hill. His name has been entered on the Biggin Hill Reunited Roll of Honour.

RIP John.

BILL COOPER

In early May we received the sad news that old Biggin Hill'ite, Bill Cooper, had passed away a couple of months before.

Very little other information is known, but Bill was apparently a member of the G-BANX group and at one time flew a Bulldog.

His name has been added to the Roll of Honour

RIP Bill

A GOOD AVIATION READ

One of our old Biggin Hill'ites, Michael Howard, a former pilot with Biggin Hill's Fairflight Charters, has written and published a book entitled "Never Answer to a Whistle", which tells the true story, well known to many of us oldies at the airport, of the repossession of an HS125 executive Jet from Nigeria in 1984.

"It was meant to be a simple task of repossessing an executive jet from Nigeria! He became embroiled in a mess created by an English aristocrat involved in illegal currency dealing. At the same time, Mossad agents were plotting the kidnapping of a Nigerian diplomat in Kensington.

To escape certain death from two groups of very angry Nigerians, he took off from Lagos International Airport, without permission, only to have the Nigerian Air Force waiting to shoot him down. They didn't succeed, but he was arrested in The Ivory Coast where he finally landed. But in a horrible twist, his friends, two engineers who helped him escape, were jailed in Nigeria for two years."

A really good read, particularly for those of us involved in aviation – even though I remember the flight happening at the time, I wasn't aware of all the intrigue behind the scenes – definitely recommended – you really won't be disappointed....

It can be purchased directly from the publisher online at: <https://griffinpublishinguk.co.uk/books>

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CLUBS, BUSINESSES & OTHER AIRPORT USERS

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

And so life grinds on at Biggin Hill, slowly, very slowly.

The virus rules have kept us closed for a long time now. A long time looking at clear blue skies!

Plans are in place for a full return for training and PPL hire, yet the whole scenario is cumbersome and reliant on everyone doing as asked.

Many point to the obvious impossibility of separation inside a cockpit. Even if some were prepared to take the risk, Alouette will not as we have a duty of care to all.

So, now solo PPLs who are current can fly and take someone from the same household too. But they choose to stay away and we don't blame them.

We expect Boris to let us operate again within a few weeks. No doubt that will be the week it rains!

Meanwhile keep reading those manuals and use simulators if you have them.

Regards
Bruno Bruniges - Club Chairman

MONTHLY NEWS FROM THE CEO'S OFFICE

A further month into the COVID-19 crisis and the optimists will point to the reducing infection rate and lifting of lockdown measures and the pessimists will point to no vaccine and concerns about a second wave of infections. Wherever you sit on this spectrum, it is highly unlikely you haven't been adversely affected by this terrible and sad crisis.

As I stated in my update last month, London Biggin Hill airport remains open as part of the national transport infrastructure in line with government guidelines. Operationally, the number of flights have remained low throughout May, with a slight increase as the restrictions of GA recreational flying have been relaxed. That said, with traffic levels at 40% of what we would normally be experiencing, the Airport has been trading at a loss.

With the easing of some of the restrictions on GA recreational flying, I am aware many of you have returned to the skies albeit in a limited fashion. I am also aware that this return has raised concerns about the increase in landing fees published on our website in March. Whilst the Airport has always published price increases via our website, I have already apologised to some members of the Light Aviation Steering Group for not raising this at our last meeting in April. However, given that our March meeting was postponed and we were dealing with the COVID-19 crisis, I am sure everyone can appreciate we had other more pressing issues to deal with.

The Airport continues to engage with central government, DfT and the CAA regarding quarantine restrictions, which will have a severe impact on the Airport's ability to recover to anything like normal operations in June. The uncertainty around quarantine and its exceptions is less than helpful at a time when businesses were hoping to see some 'shoots of recovery'.

I would like to end by wishing all the very best in these trying times and hope that you remain safe and well.

Cheers
David Winstanley

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

That's it again for this month – except for me to say to you all, please stay well and stay safe though this Pandemic.....

John Willis
Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

(And Finally: As usual, a few amusing stories that, according to the many comments I receive about this section, is very popular amongst the membership. (As always, no offence to anyone is intended!).

Thanks to everyone for sending their contributions to this section.... Please keep them coming by email to john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk , as soon as you can, as my stock for the newsletter is getting quite low now....!)

QUOTE.....

If you get an email with the subject "Knock Knock" don't open it. It will be from a Jehovah Witness working from home.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Half of us are going to come out of this quarantine as amazing cooks. The other half will come out with a drinking problem.

I used to spin that toilet paper like I was on Wheel of Fortune. Now I turn it like I'm cracking a safe.

I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Its all in the accent.....

At a travel agency in Shanghai, I asked the Chinese girl behind the counter if she could escort me on a city tour and asked her for her mobile number so I could call her to make arrangements.

She gave me a big smile, nodded her head and said, "For sex sex, wan free sex, for tonigh free."

I replied, "Wow, you Chinese women are really hospitable!"

A guy standing next to me overheard, tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Don't get excited. What she said was: 466 136 4293!"

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

My parents told me I could name my new pet dog anything I wanted and since I was a mischievous little boy, I decided to name the dog Sex. It seemed funny at first until you understand all the confusion that this caused me in my later life.

Like the day that I went to the town hall to get a dog license for Sex.

The clerk asked me what I wanted. I told him I wanted a license for Sex.

He said, "I'd like to have one, too."

Then, I said, "You don't understand. She's a dog."

He replied, "Look man, I don't care how she looks."

"No no, I've had Sex since I was 5!"

He replied, "You must have been an early bloomer."

When I decided to get married, I told the minister I wanted to have Sex at the wedding.

He told me I'd have to wait until after the wedding.

When I protested that Sex had played a big part in my life and that my whole life revolved around Sex, he said he didn't want to hear about my personal life.

After my wife and I got married, I took the dog with us on the honeymoon.

When I checked into the hotel, I told the clerk that I wanted a room for my wife and wanted one for Sex.

She replied, "Sir, every room in the hotel can be used for sex."

I said, "You don't understand. Sex keeps me awake at night."

The clerk said, "Me too!"

When my wife and I separated, we went to court to fight for custody of the dog.

When I told the Judge I had Sex before I was married, he grinned and said, "Me too."

One day my dog Sex and I took a walk and he ran away from me. I spent hours looking for that dog.

A policeman came by and asked what I was doing in this alley at midnight.

I told him, "I'm looking for Sex!"

My case comes up next Tuesday.

Now that I've been thrown in jail, married, divorced and had more trouble with that dog than I ever imagined, I'm in counselling.

My psychiatrist asked me what my problem was.

I said, "Sex has left my life. It's like losing a best friend and I'm so lonely."

He said, "Look, you and I both know that sex isn't man's best friend. Why don't you go get yourself a dog..."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A 25-year-old Jewish girl tells her mum that she has missed her period for 2 months.

Very worried, the mother goes to the local pharmacy and buys a pregnancy test kit. The test confirms that her daughter is pregnant.

Shouting and crying, the mother says, "Who was the selfish bastard that did this to you? I demand to know!"

Without answering, the girl picks up the phone and makes a call. Half an hour later, a Bentley stops in front of their house. A middle-aged and very distinguished man steps out of the car and enters the house.

He sits in the lounge with the father and mother, and tells them, "Your daughter has informed me of the problem. I can't marry her because of my personal family situation but I'll take charge. I will pay all costs and provide for your daughter for the rest of her life."

He continues, "Additionally, if a girl is born I will bequeath two retail furniture stores, a deli, a chateau in France and a £1m bank account."

He continues, "If a boy is born my legacy will be a chain of jewellery stores and a £25m bank account."

"However, if there is a miscarriage I'm not sure what to do. What would you suggest?"

All silent at this point, the mother placed a hand firmly on the man's shoulder and told him

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"You'll try again."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Darryl came home one night from a long day of strenuous retiring, slid into bed beside his sleeping wife and fell into a deep slumber.

He awoke before the Pearly Gates, where St. Peter said, 'You died in your sleep, Darryl.'

Darryl was stunned. 'I'm dead? No, I can't be! I've got too much to live for. Send me back!'

St. Peter said, 'I'm sorry, but there's only one way you can go back, and that is as a chicken.'

Darryl was devastated, but begged St. Peter to send him to a farm near his home. The next thing he knew, he was covered with feathers, clucking and pecking the ground.

A rooster strolled past. 'So, you're the new hen, huh? How's your first day here?'

'Not bad,' replied Darryl the hen, 'but I have this strange feeling inside. Like I'm gonna explode!'

'You're ovulating,' explained the rooster. 'Don't tell me you've never laid an egg before?'

'Never,' said Darryl.

'Well, just relax and let it happen,' says the rooster. 'It's no big deal.'

He did, and a few uncomfortable seconds later, out popped an egg! He was overcome with emotion as he experienced motherhood. He soon laid another egg - his joy was overwhelming.

As he was about to lay his third egg, he felt a smack on the back of his head and heard "Darryl, wake up! You've shit the bed!"

Getting OLD just isn't what they said it would be!

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A guy bought a new fridge for his house.

To get rid of his old fridge (still working), he put it in his front yard and hung a Sign on it saying: 'Free to good home. You want it, you take it.'

For three days the fridge sat there without anyone looking twice. He eventually decided that people were too mistrustful of this deal.

So he changed the sign to read: 'Fridge for sale \$50.'

The next day someone stole it!

They walk amongst us!

One day I was walking down the beach with some friends when someone shouted.....

"Look at that dead bird!"

Someone looked up at the sky and said..."Where?"

They walk among us!

While looking at a house, my brother asked the estate agent which direction was north because he didn't want the sun waking him up every morning.

She asked, 'Does the sun rise in the north?'

My brother explained that the sun rises in the east and has for some time.

She shook her head and said, 'Oh, I don't keep up with all that stuff.....'

They Walk Among Us!

My colleague and I were eating our lunch in our cafeteria, when we overheard an admin girl talking about the sunburn she got on her weekend drive to the beach.

She drove down in a convertible, but said she "didn't think she'd get sunburned because the car was moving."

They Walk Among Us!

My sister has a lifesaving tool in her car which is designed to cut through a seat belt if she gets trapped.

She keeps it in the car trunk.

They Walk Among Us!

I couldn't find my luggage at the airport baggage area and went to the lost luggage office and reported the loss.

The woman there smiled and told me not to worry because she was a trained professional and said I was in good hands.

'Now,' she asked me, 'has your plane arrived yet?'

(I work with professionals like this.)

They Walk Among Us!

While working at a pizza parlour I observed a man ordering a small pizza to go He appeared to be alone and the cook asked him if he would like it cut into 4 pieces or 6.

He thought about it for some time then said "Just cut it into 4 pieces; I don't think I'm hungry enough to eat 6 pieces."

They Walk Among Us!

A man was driving when he saw the flash of a traffic camera.

He figured that his picture had been taken for exceeding the limit, even though he knew that he was not speeding.

Just to be sure, he went around the block and passed the same spot, driving even more slowly, but again the camera flashed.

Now he began to think that this was quite funny, so he drove even slower as he passed the area again, but the traffic camera again flashed.

He tried a fourth time with the same result. He did this a fifth time and was now laughing when the camera flashed as he rolled past, this time at a snail's pace.

Two weeks later, he got five tickets in the mail for Driving without a seat belt!!!

You can't fix stupid.
.....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"...))