

Hi everyone

Welcome to the March 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.

As a result of the lockdown introduced on 4th January, there has been virtually no GA activity since the last Newsletter, so again, this Newsletter is a very brief one....

You are reminded that, even if you don't get your Newsletter by email, 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!)

FEBRUARY WEATHER

This month, remaining in the lockdown, and with Leisure Flying prevented under law, again the weather has again been somewhat irrelevant, as we have all been unable to fly. One day we might actually be able to fly again!

UK COVID LOCKDOWN

As with last month, Covid restrictions are still preventing flying for leisure or PPL /LAPL training yet again. There have been many posts on Social Media that suggest all will be back to normal on certain dates in March, but these dates are refuted by the CAA and more importantly, the Department for Transport, who are the Government Department that has the responsibility of advising us all when these restrictions will be relaxed. At the time of writing this Newsletter, the DfT have not published any changes to the rules that would permit us to fly!

Clearly, as the lockdown does seem to have reduced the number of cases, deaths, and people in Hospitals quite substantially, we all expect the situation to improve in the not too distant future – BUT currently nothing has yet been formally published so we must ensure we don't jump the gun!

We are still in Lockdown and prevented from doing training and leisure flying – please be patient, it will eventually come, but it's not there yet!

MARCH BIGGIN HILL POSTED FUEL PRICES

The "posted" Biggin Hill Airport fuel prices, excluding VAT, for the calendar month of March 2021 has yet to be published. Just for interest, a reminder of February's rates are:

£1:46.5 per litre for 100LL Avgas if supplied from the Fuel Bowser (if uplifted using account card
Only from the Self-Refuel pumps = minus 4p per litre)

£0:56.2 per litre for Jet A1

SPECIAL NOTE: Users should be aware that credit and debit cards still cannot currently be used at the self-refuel pumps. The situation is likely to remain this way for some time, so if you use self-refuelling, please make sure you have your airport H-TEC fuel account card with you when you go there.

If an updated set of fuel prices are subsequently released by the airport, I will post them on the BigginHillReunited Group's Facebook page.

BACK TO FLYING EVENTUALLY – THINGS TO REMEMBER

In view of the lockdown, many of us will probably be very rusty and possibly may even have invalid licences! As there is so little for me to write about in this month's newsletter because of the lack of GA flying still, I felt it might be a good idea to use the space to remind us all of what we should look out for.....

Flying while Lockdown is still in place. In spite of what some people will suggest, no "leisure" flying or training for such flying is permitted, but with just a couple of exceptions:

If you own an aircraft, which has not of course been able to fly under lockdown, but which still has a valid Certificate of Release, then it MAY be permitted to carry out an engine maintenance flight periodically in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations – typically this will be an "A to A" flight of either 30 or 60 minutes once every one or two months. But, on such flights you must NOT have passengers on board!!!

If you are training for a professional licence, then this training may continue, including hour building or ratings required before commencing the formal CPL course itself. This is NOT just that you have a vague idea that one day you might think of doing one, but being able to prove that you are already working towards it, for example that you have already passed all or at least most of the required CPL/ATPL written exams!

Flying once the lockdown restrictions are formally lifted (Although, as we said above, no formal dates have yet been announced, in spite of many people suggesting it's going to be OK from certain dates!) so we are unable to fly again yet for leisure purposes. So before we do get into the air again:

It is imperative that you check that your Pilots Licence and Medical are still current and valid. For example:

Is the licence still valid (older licences had an expiry date whereas newer ones are for life)?

Is your SEP or other expiring ratings still shown as still valid on your licence?

Does your medical Certificate still have calendar time left until it expires.

And remember, you cannot carry any passengers unless you have provably completed 3 take offs and landings within the preceding 90 calendar days!

Things to remember when flying restarts at Biggin:

Noise sensitive areas: Make sure you are fully familiar with the noise sensitive areas adjacent to the airport that should be avoided. There is a pamphlet available from the airport that illustrates these, and some computer devices also show these on the moving map applications like SkyDemon. Principally, these include: Biggin Hill village and Tatsfield and Downe Villages, and Keston and Orpington built up areas, plus the housing along the main road alongside the airport. Please try to be a good neighbour to avoid any issues for the airport itself.

Noise abatement procedures: It is important also to follow the noise abatement procedures at Biggin. These are not too onerous – just a 10 degree "track" change to the right on crossing the main road on runway 21 departures, or a right turn at one mile towards Sevenoaks on departure from runway 03. And of course on 21 departures don't turn left too early so as to avoid overflying Tatsfield.

You are reminded that operating or promoting cost sharing flights on such platforms as Wingly or similar, are totally banned at Biggin Hill. (if you believe you can, then I'd advise you to look at the A.I.P. textual information section – 2.20 Local Aerodrome Regulations – item 1 (h))

As I would hope many of you would find out when reading the NOTAM's before flying - Farnborough Lower Airspace Radar Service (LARS) is currently out of service.

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

Another grounded month has past and, like the rest of you, we at Alouette are just itching to get back amongst the birds. The weather this month hasn't been the best for flying with some particularly windy days at Biggin, but spring is certainly now in the air and the improving weather, together with the impressive vaccine rollout, leads us all to hope it won't be too much longer now.

At the time of writing, we wait with baited breath for word from the DfT on when GA flying can resume, but needless to say we will be ready to go whenever they give the signal.

Aside from the obvious global pandemic risk, we pilots must also be aware of significant "skill Fade". I know I am feeling rusty and I am sure I am not the only one.

With the prospect of flying again not too far away now, I would urge you all to do what you can to refresh your knowledge (I have been walking circuits in my garden and making radio calls to my cat). As a club, we have decided that members must take a flight with an instructor before you go it alone to satisfy both our insurers and our DTO requirements..

Remember that we at Alouette are always here to help when you need a check flight whenever the time actually comes.

Until that glorious day, stay safe, stay sane and keep on keeping on!

Stuart Taylor
Club Chairman

MONTHLY NEWS FROM THE CEO'S OFFICE

As I write this latest update for the newsletter, the Airport is picking through the governments roadmap to easing lockdown restrictions and trying to see when we might get clear guidance regarding General and Business Aviation. Through RABA and the AOA, the Airport is endeavouring to ensure we can influence the governments new global travel task force, which is due to report directly to the PM by 12th April. We hope that we might see significant easing of existing travel and flying restrictions by 17th May. In the meantime, we will continue to enforce only legally permitted essential flying.

The impact upon the wider Aviation Industry was eased to a limited extent by the launch of the governments Airport Ground Operations Support Scheme; however, this excluded all airports with less than 12 scheduled aircraft movements. This resulted in the vast majority of smaller airports, including Biggin Hill, from being excluded from the scheme. It is impossible to fathom why medium size airports that have the backing of significant foreign investors should benefit at the exclusion of smaller airports across the UK.

Trading throughout February has been as challenging as January and this continues to present significant challenges for a business like ours with high fixed costs. Traffic levels remain almost 50% down on what we would expect in a normal February and we acknowledge that many of our partners across the Airport will be faced with similar challenges.

Thankfully, developments at the Airport continue at pace, and the whole community will see significant work being undertaken throughout March, April and May to ensure the Airport is ready for the expected increase in movements from June onwards. The Bombardier Hangar developments continues to be ahead of programme, and we will shortly start work on extending the apron abeam hangar 446 to support out Jota operation. Additionally, we will be accelerating our resurfacing programme, and work will commence on both taxiways Foxtrot and Delta within the next 2 months. In the next week or so we will start to replace our existing ILS, which should be completed within the month of March. Lastly, it would appear the Airport is close to completing the final stage of the 03 GPS air space change process, and we are targeting an in-operation date of 17th June.

Last month I informed the community that the Chairman had decided to commission a book capturing both the history and the future of Biggin Hill Airport. The author, Alex Martin, is keen to start his research, via zoom, and will soon be contacting individuals to discuss their stories about Biggin Hill. Anyone interested in supporting the project can drop me an email.

Finally, I hope you all stay 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 for this month..... Stay well and please stay safe.....

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.... **To avoid me running out of them, please keep them coming by email to john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk .**

QUOTE.....

A group of Pilots all turning 40, discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally, it was agreed that they would meet at The Kings Arms at Biggin Hill, because the waitresses had big breasts and wore tiny mini skirts.

Ten years later, at age 50, the Pilots once again discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally, it was agreed that they would meet The Kings Arms at Biggin Hill, because the waitresses were very attractive, the food and service were good and the beer selection was excellent.

Ten years later, at age 60, the Pilots again discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally, it was agreed that they would meet at The Kings Arms at Biggin Hill, because there was plenty of parking, they could dine in peace and quiet with no loud music, and it was good value for money.

Ten years later, at age 70, the Pilots discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally, it was agreed that they would meet at The Kings Arms at Biggin Hill, because the restaurant was wheelchair-accessible and had a toilet for the disabled.

Ten years later, at age 80, the Pilots discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally, it was agreed that they would meet at The Kings Arms at Biggin Hill, because they had never been there before.

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QUOTE.....

Some brief quickies.....

Mary had a little skirt,
It split right up the sides.
And everywhere that Mary went,
The boys could see her thighs.
She also had another skirt,
It split right up the front.
She never wore that one.....

Don't forget, we are fast approaching the 3 days of the year when men are always right. 29th, 30th and 31st February.

A bloke walks into a Glasgow library and says to the prim librarian,
'Excuse me Miss, dey ye hae ony books on suicide?'
To which she stops doing her tasks, looks at him over the top of her glasses and says, 'Bugger off, ye'll no bring it back!'

I used to be an anti-vaxxer, til I heard that having the jab annoys the European Commission!

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

One day a man decided to retire... He booked himself on a Caribbean cruise and proceeded to have the time of his life, that is, until the ship sank.

He soon found himself on an island with no other people, no supplies, nothing, only bananas and coconuts.

After about four months, he is lying on the beach one day when the most gorgeous woman he has ever seen rows up to the shore.

In disbelief, he asks, "Where did you come from? How did you get here?"

She replies, "I rowed over from the other side of the island where I landed when my cruise ship sank."

"Amazing," he notes. "You were really lucky to have a row boat wash up with you."

"Oh, this thing?" explains the woman. "I made the boat out of some raw material I found on the island. The oars were whittled from gum tree branches. I wove the bottom from palm tree branches, and the sides and stern came from an Eucalyptus tree."

"But, where did you get the tools?"

"Oh, that was no problem," replied the woman. "On the south side of the island, a very unusual stratum of alluvial rock is exposed. I found that if I fired it to a certain temperature in my kiln, it melted into ductile iron and I used that to make tools and used the tools to make the hardware."

The guy is stunned.

"Let's row over to my place," she says "and I'll give you a tour." So, after a short time of rowing, she soon docks the boat at a small wharf. As the man looks to shore, he nearly falls off the boat.

Before him is a long stone walk leading to a cabin and tree house.

While the woman ties up the rowboat with an expertly woven hemp rope, the man can only stare ahead, dumb struck.

As they walk into the house, she says casually, "It's not much, but I call it home. Please sit down."

"Would you like a drink?"

"No! No thank you," the man blurts out, still dazed. "I can't take another drop of coconut juice."

"Oh, it's not coconut juice," winks the woman. "I have a still. How would you like a Tropical Spritz?"

Trying to hide his continued amazement, the man accepts, and they sit down on her couch to talk. After they exchange their individual survival stories, the woman announces, "I'm going to slip into something more comfortable. Would you like to take a shower and shave? There's a razor in the bathroom cabinet upstairs."

No longer questioning anything, the man goes upstairs into the bathroom. There, in the cabinet is a razor made from a piece of tortoise bone. Two shells honed to a hollow ground edge are fastened on to its end inside a swivel mechanism.

"This woman is amazing," he muses. "What's next?"

When he returns, she greets him wearing nothing but some small flowers on tiny vines, each strategically positioned, she smelled faintly of gardenias. She then beckons for him to sit down next to her.

"Tell me," she begins suggestively, slithering closer to him, "We've both been out here for many months. You must have been lonely. When was the last time you played around? She stares into his eyes.

He can't believe what he's hearing. "You mean..." he swallows excitedly as tears start to form in his eyes,

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"You've built a Golf Course?
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QUOTE.....

Some friends and I went out to a new restaurant, and noticed that the waiter who took our order carried a spoon in his shirt pocket.

It seemed a little strange.

When the busboy brought our water and utensils, I noticed he also had a spoon in his shirt pocket.

Then I looked around and saw that all the staff had spoons in their pockets.

When the waiter came back to serve our soup I asked, "why the spoon?"

"Well", he explained, "the restaurant's owners hired Andersen Consulting to revamp all our processes. After several months of analysis, they concluded that the spoon was the most frequently dropped utensil. It represents a drop frequency of approximately 3 spoons per table per hour. If our personnel are better prepared, we can reduce the number of trips back to the kitchen and save 15 man-hours per shift"

As luck would have it, I dropped my spoon and he was able to replace it with his spare. "I'll get another spoon next time I go to the kitchen instead of making an extra trip to get it right now".

I was impressed.

I also noticed that there was a string hanging out of the waiter's fly. Looking around, I noticed that all the waiters had the same string hanging from their flies.

So before he walked off, I asked the waiter, "Excuse me, but can you tell me why you have that string right there?"

"Oh, certainly!" Then he lowered his voice. "Not everyone is so observant. That consulting firm I mentioned also found out that we can save time in the restroom. By tying this string to the tip of you-know-what, we can pull it out without touching it and eliminate the need to wash our hands, shortening the time spent in the restroom by 76.39%"

I asked, "After you get it out, how do you put it back?"

"Well," he whispered, "I don't know about the others,....."

"but I use the spoon."
.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Her entry

Tonight, I thought my husband was acting weird.

We had made plans to meet at a nice restaurant for dinner.

I was shopping with my friends all day long, so I thought he was upset at the fact that I was a bit late, but he made no comment on it.

Conversation wasn't flowing, so I suggested that we go somewhere quiet so we could talk. He agreed, but he didn't say much.

I asked him what was wrong; he said "nothing". I asked him if it was my fault that he was upset.

He said that he wasn't upset, that it had nothing to do with me, and not to worry about it.

On the way home I told him that I loved him. He smiled slightly and kept driving.

I can't explain his behaviour. I don't know why he didn't say "I love you too".

When we got home I felt as if I had lost him completely, as if he wanted nothing to do with me anymore.

He just sat there quietly and watched T.V. He continued to seem distant and absent.

Finally, with silence all around us, I decided to go to bed. About fifteen minutes later he came to bed. But I still felt that he was distracted, and his thoughts were somewhere else. He fell asleep; I cried. I don't know what to do. I'm almost sure that his thoughts are with someone else.

My life is a disaster.

His entry

A two-foot putt Who the hell misses a two-foot putt?

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

On a golf tour in Ireland, Tiger Woods drives his BMW into a petrol station in a remote part of the Irish countryside.

The pump attendant obviously knows nothing about golf, greet him in a typical Irish manner completely unaware of who the golfing pro is. "Top of the mornin' to yer, Sir", says the attendant.

Tiger nods a quick "Hello" and bends forward to pick up the nozzle. As he does so, two tees fall out of his shirt pocket onto the ground.

"What are dose?" asks the attendant.

"They're called tees", replies Tiger.

"Well, what on the god's earth are dey for?", inquires the Irishman.

"They're for resting my balls on when I'm driving", says Tiger.

"Fookin Jaysus", says the Irishman, "BMW thinks of everything!"

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Sixteen Logical Reasons Why Some Men Have Dogs—And Not Wives:

1. The later you are, the more excited your dog is to see you.
2. Dogs don't notice if you call them by another dog's name.
3. Dogs like it if you leave lots of things on the floor.
4. Dogs' parents never visit.
5. Dogs agree that you have to raise your voice to get your point across.
6. You never have to wait for a dog; they're ready to go, instantly, 24 hours a day.
7. Dogs find you amusing when you're pissed.
8. Dogs like to go hunting and fishing.
9. Dogs won't wake you up at night to ask: "If I died, would you get another dog?"
10. If a dog has babies, you can put an ad in the paper and sell 'em.
11. When you drop a silent one, dogs don't run around frantically with room spray.
13. Dogs never tell you to stop scratching your b--ls. Instead, they sit pondering why you don't lick 'em.
14. Dogs will let you put a studded collar on, without calling you a pervert.
15. If a dog smells another dog on you, it won't kick you in the crotch; it just finds it interesting.

And last but not least.....

16. If a dog runs off and leaves you, it won't take half your stuff.

To verify these statements: Lock your wife and your dog in the garage for an hour. Then open the door and observe who's happy to see you!

.....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"...)