

Hi everyone

Welcome to the May 2011 Biggin Hill Users Database Newsletter. The May 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>

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 ADDRESS UPDATES AND ADDITIONS

Thanks to those who have sent amended email addresses, and suggested new members, and of course, welcome also 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..

#### NEW EMAIL ADDRESS FOR JOHN BRYAN (JB)

In case you haven't noticed the change above, please note that JB has a new email address with immediate effect. It is now [johnbryan13@sky.com](mailto:johnbryan13@sky.com) - if you have stored his address in your email system, please remember to change it now.

#### MERVIN COVENTRY

We were informed recently, by Vic Beattie, that Mervin Coventry - another old Biggin Hill'ite - had recently passed away.

Mervin, who was now into his mid 80's, and living in Melbourne Australia (his country of birth), was formerly a flying instructor with Alouette in the mid 1960's. He was a popular and sociable chap, and was well known to many of us oldies from that era. After leaving Biggin Hill many years ago he returned to Australia, returning only once for a short visit, when he stayed with Vic Beattie. He apparently spent some years working for the Australian airline, Ansett, although not in a flying capacity before eventually retiring.

#### STEVE KEATING

Too late for inclusion in the April Newsletter, myself and Mike Hogan met up in late March with old Biggin Hill'ite, Steve Keating, who was visiting the UK briefly from his current home in Australia.

Steve was one of the first pilots employed by Mike and I when we started Centreline Air Services at Biggin back in the late 70's. Operating on the Cessna 310's and PA31 Chieftain, before the Bandeirante's arrived on the fleet, Steve was fresh out of CPL training at the time. He went on to fly for various airlines, including Dan Air, and latterly British Airways, where he finished up as a Training Captain on triple 7's.

It was some 30 odd years since we had seen Steve, so it was great to see him for a few beers at the Old Jail during his flying (no pun intended!) visit to the UK.

#### JOHN QUAYLE

Formerly an Air Traffic Controller at Biggin, and subsequently a Commercial pilot, John moved to the Channel Islands with his wife Annette (who was also a former Biggin Hill controller). Now residents near Granville in France with their children, John is seldom seen at Biggin nowadays, although he is still a club member and is on the BigginHillReunited database.

However, having said that, John did pass through Biggin a few months back and was surprised to find barriers everywhere preventing him further airport access. He tried the terminal to stop by for a coffee and a sandwich, but was put off by the barrier there. He also tried the South Camp, to visit Roger Patterson at S&KFC plus Shipping etc., but on seeing the barriers decided not to try to proceed any

further as he prefers to avoid any chances of confrontation. He did feel that the airport seemed to have little of the “soul” that the airport used to exhibit.

Such a shame that he, as a casual but knowledgeable visitor, felt that way about the airport. If he saw it that way, is that possibly how potential customers for airport based businesses see the place? If so, maybe valuable income to those companies is being lost. I am not sure what the answer is, but surely there is a way to make it less daunting?

For old Biggin Hill’ites – The barriers are there for valid security purposes, not to stop legitimate airport visitors. If you find yourself in the area, and want to visit the snack bar in the terminal, pulling up at the security barrier and explaining the reason for your visit to the very friendly security staff on duty there will, I am sure, allow access. Similarly, for those that do not know about it, the barriers on the South Camp, will automatically raise if you edge your car close to the barrier, and this will enable you to visit all the based companies and clubs that reside on the other side of the barriers. Don’t be afraid of the airport security system, it is positive security that ensures the airport can continue to operate so close to the Country’s Capital City with limited restrictions.

### BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB

Thanks to all those who have renewed their membership. Existing members who have yet to renew can do so by simply sending in their fee with a self addressed stamped envelope – no new form is required, and no photo (unless you want to use a different one for the new card of course!) Full details on the club website at [www.bigginhillclub.co.uk](http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk)

Applications from new potential members should follow the instructions on the website.

That’s it again for this month...

John Willis - Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

(And Finally:

Thanks to Ray Thorpe from Canada for this month’s “and finally” - I thought it was really interesting....

QUOTE.....

Two Stories both of which are true.

### STORY NUMBER ONE

Many years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago. Capone wasn’t famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for enmeshing the windy city in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder.

Capone had a lawyer nicknamed ‘Easy Eddie.’ He was Capone’s lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie’s skill at legal manoeuvring kept Big Al out of jail for a long time.

To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big, but Eddie got special dividends, as well. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block. Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him.

Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object. And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was.

Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn’t give his son; he couldn’t pass on a good name or a good example.

One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Easy Eddie wanted to rectify wrongs he had done.

He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al 'Scarface' Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. So, he testified.

Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street . But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he could ever pay. Police removed from his pockets a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medallion, and a poem clipped from a magazine.

The poem read:

'The clock of life is wound but once, and no man has the power to tell just when the hands will stop, at late or early hour. Now is the only time you own. Live, love, toil with a will. Place no faith in time. For the clock may soon be still.'

## STORY NUMBER TWO

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific.

One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship. His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet.

As he was returning to the mother ship, he saw something that turned his blood cold; a squadron of Japanese aircraft was speeding its way toward the American fleet.

The American fighters were gone on a sortie, and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet.

Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 caliber's blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until all his ammunition was finally spent. Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible, rendering them unfit to fly.

Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction.

Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier. Upon arrival, he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun-camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had, in fact, destroyed five enemy aircraft.

This took place on February 20, 1942 , and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of W.W.II, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor.

A year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His home town would not allow the memory of this WW II hero to fade, and today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man. So, the next time you find yourself at O'Hare International, give some thought to visiting Butch's memorial displaying his statue and his Medal of Honor. It's located between Terminals 1 and 2.

SO WHAT DO THESE TWO STORIES HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?

Butch O'Hare was 'Easy Eddie's' son.

.....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"...) )