

Hi everyone

Welcome to the May 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!)

CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

As most current airport users will of course be aware, April has been subject to very obvious restrictions for all forms of light aircraft "recreational flying", which the CAA have made clear is not permitted.

There was a slight relaxation of this restriction towards the end of the month, when it became possible, in some circumstances to pre-clear special maintenance test flights once a month and this included aircraft that had new engines recently fitted that need regular flights to enable the engine to fully "bed in". (special permission is required from the airport, and the flights should normally not exceed 30 minutes and no further than 10 miles from the airport, and no more frequently than one flight a month. No training is permitted on these flights.

All club training and PPL flying has been grounded and the airport's clubs closed to prevent breaching the Social Distancing requirements and to obviously discourage unnecessary and non-essential travel.

The airport is still 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, as things improve more and show a consistent downward trend on hospital attendances and deaths from the virus, we may start to see a slow relaxation of restrictions, but this is likely to be relatively slow once this starts. It is highly unlikely that things will suddenly revert completely to pre-virus normality.

APRIL WEATHER

From the very changeable and often unflyable weather in the early part of the year, pretty much from the point of the start of the Corona Virus formal Lockdown, the weather changed and has been consistently CAVOK (until today as I write this!). Such a shame no one can make use of it to enjoy light aircraft flying in the sunshine. Hopefully in time this lockdown will be relaxed allowing us to enjoy our hobby again (although judging by how everything normally goes, that's when the weather will change and we will have unpleasant conditions again!)

MAY BIGGIN HILL POSTED FUEL PRICES

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

£1.17 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)

£0.41 per litre for Jet A1

A BAD MONTH FOR OUR FRIENDS....

This month has really been a bad month for the loss of our friends. This time of the year can often be bad anyway, but this has been even worse than normal..... The names follow.....

BILL WUNDERLICH

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of old Biggin Hill'ite, Bill Wunderlich, who at age 87 died early on Monday morning this week.

Bill became interested in Aviation as a 14 year old Air Cadet. Some years later whilst running his new business, Automotive Engineering Services with his wife in Bromley, the family often visited Biggin Hill Airport with the family on Sundays to watch the aircraft. In 1970 he learnt to fly at South London Aero Club at Biggin, which is where he first met his lifelong friend Bill Webb.

He originally was a cinema projectionist before moving into wireless, where he was tutored by the well known wireless inventor and broadcasting pioneer of the time, Captain Peter Eckersley. He went on to working in the oil industry throughout the world, before running his own business until his retirement around three years ago. Throughout the years he held and used an amateur radio licence.

He was a CAA licenced aircraft engineer and his knowledge about aircraft engines and airframes was Unrivalled. A great friend of Singh Bamrah who tells me that, over the years, he owned a number of different aircraft, including a Cessna F150J G-AWSD and a Piper PA28-140 G-ASSW, which he totally rebuilt from scratch.

In recent years he suffered from two strokes the last of which caused immense damage, which is why he was latterly in a care home, where he died of Covid-19 and other infections.

Bill's name has been added to the Biggin Hill Reunited Roll of Honour – he will be missed by his many friends at the airport - R.I.P. Bill

ROGER BUTLER

During this month we received the sad news that old Biggin Hill'ite, Roger (the Bank) Butler, had passed away. Roger was known to many in the wonderful old days of Joe's Bar.

Roger's name has been entered on the Roll of Honour on BigginHillReunited.co.uk

Sadly Missed by his Airport friends – R.I.P. Roger

GARY STRONG

It is with regret that I have to inform you that we have lost another Bigginhill'ite - Gary Strong.

During the 80's Gary worked at the Airport, where he maintained all the airport vehicles and assisted the Fire Crew. Gary always had his collie dog Sam with him at work. Sam knew exactly where he was allowed to go on the airport and where not.

After leaving the airport Gary , with his Partner Keith, managed one or two Public Houses / Restaurants in the Kent area at Hever, Heaverham and lastly at Crockham Hill.

Gary was at his home in County Mayo, Ireland when he suffered a serious stroke. He was cremated in his Irish home town on Wednesday 15th April 2020, and his Partner is planning to bring his ashes back to Kent and will organise a Memorial Service which everyone will be invited to attend. I will publish the details once I have them.

Gary's name has been entered on the Roll of Honour on BigginHillReunited.co.uk - R.I.P. Gary...

COLIN UZZEL

It is with regret that I have to inform you of the sad passing of former Biggin Hill Airport refueller, Colin Uzzel.

His name has been entered on the Roll of Honour on BigginHillReunited.co.uk

Colin will undoubtedly be missed by his many friends from the old days at the airport

R.I.P. Colin

PETER BOGUE

It is sad to announce yet another old Biggin Hill'ite's passing. Peter Bogue was trained in the RAF, ending up flying Meteor's from RAF West Malling.

In civvy life, he was employed by Gold Air at Biggin, before working with Dan Graham flying Dan's Citation and his Tiger Moth. When Dan sold the Biggin Hill West Camp, Peter retired and moved to the Isle of Man.

He was married to Shirley and they had one son, who is a pilot with Easyjet. Peter sadly was diagnosed with cancer, from which he passed away on 19th April.

Described by a close friend as an old school, true English gentleman. Peter's name has been entered on the Biggin Hill Reunited Roll of Honour

R.I.P. Peter

ARE YOU THINKING OF BUYING AN AIRCRAFT OR A SHARE IN ONE?

As I mentioned in an earlier Newsletter, I currently own a Biggin Hill based Piper PA28-180C that is particularly nicely equipped. Due to my health issues restricting my ability to fly it that often, I am looking at my options for the aircraft:

Option one is to carry on as the sole owner,

Option two is, of course, that I could sell the aircraft outright.

Option three is that I could sell (say) a half share in it to a suitable person and share the costs with them.

If you have thought of maybe owning or sharing an aircraft and one of the second or third options might be something that could interest you personally, please drop me an email with your contact details and what you feel might be your preferences. I would then send you the details
(john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk)

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

The 'Lockdown' must be ending soon. How do I know? Because the endless clear sky days have been replaced with solid low rain clouds! Typical.

Still, a little more time for you to dust off that flight bag and re-read those books.

As soon as Boris gives us the go-ahead email bookings@alouette.org.uk to grab a slot and instructor if needed to get yourself back in the air.

Two pristine Cessna 172's await you.

Any of you can use us, even if you are a private owner or come from another club or airfield - Take advantage of our excellent rates!

Sadly though, our bar remains shut for now - come on Boris - prioritise!

Regards
Bruno Bruniges - Club Chairman

MONTHLY NEWS FROM THE CEO's OFFICE

The reference to 'unprecedented times' has been used more often in the past 4 weeks than probably any of us would have expected in a year and never was a phrase more appropriate. COVID-19 has changed our landscape globally as well as nationally. The Aviation industry post COVID-19 could well be unrecognisable from its pre-crisis state.

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 has dropped significantly and we are operating at traffic levels at 40% of what we would normally be experiencing.

I appreciate this is a frustrating time for the GA community. The lockdown restrictions and the justification criteria for essential flights are all the more difficult to accept given the beautiful weather experienced throughout April. That said, the Airport is under severe scrutiny to ensure all flights are essential and meet with government, DfT and CAA guidelines.

We have received a significant number of requests to fly for the purpose of maintenance and that is why we issued the revised guidance we had received from the CAA. Each PPR request should clearly state under which CAA guidance they believe their particular flight complies. Once approved, it is the pilot's responsibility to ensure the flight complies with the CAA guidance.

We are engaging actively with central government, DfT and the CAA regarding discussions covering restart and recovery and we will ensure the interests of both the business and general aviation communities are represented. As this moment in time, it is difficult, if not impossible, to predict the recovery strategy. We will keep you informed and thank you for your patience.

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 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: Following many comments last month from readers who, whilst agreeing with the sentiments expressed and the removal of the usual jokes section that month, actually felt that it should be reinstated to endeavour to lighten the mood in these difficult times.

So therefore this is included once again. (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.....

So a plane had 5 passengers on board: Donald Trump, the Pope, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Hilary Clinton, and a 10 year old school girl.

The plane is about to crash, and there are only 4 parachutes.

Dr. Fauci said, "I need one. I have to help develop a cure for the global health crisis Covid-19!" He takes one and jumps.

The Pope said "I need one of the parachutes, I have to help guide people through the crisis with prayers." He takes one and jumps.

Donald Trump said: "I need one of those, I'm the smartest man in the USA." He takes one and jumps.

Hilary said to the 10 year old: "You can have the last parachute." "I've lived my life, yours is only starting."

The 10 year old said "Don't worry, there are 2 parachutes left.. The smartest man in the USA took my school bag."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

I recently spent \$6,500 on a young registered Black Angus bull.

I put him out with the herd but he just ate grass and wouldn't even look at a cow. I was beginning to think I had paid more for that bull than he was worth.

Anyhow, I had the Vet come and have a look at him. He said the bull was very healthy, but possibly just a little young, so he gave me some pills to feed him once per day.

The bull started to service the cows within two days, all my cows! He even broke through the fence and bred with all of my neighbour's cows! He's like a machine!

I don't know what was in the pills the Vet gave him but they kind of taste like peppermint.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A priest dies and is waiting in line at the Pearly Gates. Ahead of him is a guy who's dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket, and jeans.

Saint Peter addresses this cool guy, " Who are you, so that I may know whether or not to admit you to the Kingdom of Heaven?"

The guy replies, "I'm Jack, retired airline pilot from Houston."

Saint Peter consults his list. He smiles and says to the pilot, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom."

The pilot goes into Heaven with his robe and staff.

Next, it's the priest's turn. He stands erect and booms out, "I am Father Bob, pastor of Saint Mary's for the last 43 years."

Saint Peter consults his list. He says to the priest, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom"

Just a minute,' says the good father. "That man was a pilot and he gets a silken robe and golden staff and I get only cotton and wood. How can this be?"

"Up here - we go by results," says Saint Peter. "When you preached, people slept. When he flew, people prayed"

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A family moved into a house next door to an empty plot. One day Joe, Steve and a gang of building workers turned up to start building a house.

The young family's 5-year-old daughter naturally took an interest in all the activity going on next door and started talking with the workers.

She hung around and eventually the builders, all with hearts of gold, more or less adopted the little girl as a sort of project mascot. They chatted with her, let her sit with them while they had tea and lunch breaks, and gave her little jobs to do here and there to make her feel important. They even gave her, her very own hard hat and gloves.

At the end of the first week they presented her with a pay envelope containing two Pounds in 10 Pence coins. The little girl took her 'pay' home to her mother who suggested that they take the money she had received to the bank the next day to start a savings account.

When they got to the bank the cashier was tickled pink listening to the little girl telling her about her 'work' on the building site and the fact she had a 'pay packet'.

'You must have worked very hard to earn all this,' said the bank cashier.

The little girl proudly replied, 'I worked all last week with the men building a big house.'

'My goodness gracious,' said the cashier. 'Will you be working on the house again this week, as well?' The little girl thought for a moment and said...

"I think so. Provided those wankers at Jewsons deliver the fucking bricks and it doesn't piss down with rain."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Politicians and diapers have one thing in common: they should both be changed regularly... and for the same reason.

AND NOW SOME VERY BRAVE MAN JOKES.....

What is the difference between a battery and a woman?

A battery has a positive side.

How do you make 5 pounds of fat look good?

Put a nipple on it.

Why do women fake orgasms?

Because they think men care

Why do men pass gas more than women?

Because women can't shut up long enough to build up the required pressure.

If your dog is barking at the back door and your wife is yelling at the front door, who do you let in first?

The dog, of course. He'll shut up once you let it in.

Scientists have discovered a food that diminishes a woman's sex drive by 90%...

It's called a Wedding Cake

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A crowded United Airlines flight was cancelled. A single agent was re-booking a long line of inconvenienced travellers.

Suddenly, an angry passenger pushed his way to the desk. He slapped his ticket on the counter and said, "I HAVE to be on this flight and it has to be FIRST CLASS."

The agent replied, "I'm sorry, sir. I'll be happy to try to help you, but I've got to help these folks first; and then I'm sure we'll be able to work something out."

The passenger was unimpressed. He asked loudly, so that the passengers behind him could hear, "DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO I AM?"

Without hesitating, the agent smiled and grabbed her public address microphone. "May I have your attention, please?", she began, her voice heard clearly throughout the terminal. "We have a passenger here at Gate 14 WHO DOES NOT KNOW WHO HE IS. If anyone can help him with his identity, please come to Gate 14".

With the folks behind him in line laughing hysterically, the man glared at the United Airlines agent, gritted his teeth, and said, "F*** You!"

Without flinching, she smiled and said, "I'm sorry sir, you'll have to get in line for that, too."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

The only way to pull off a lockdown afternoon 'quickie' with their 8-year old son in the apartment was to send him out on the balcony with a Mars Bar and tell him to report on all the street activities.

He began his commentary as his parents put their plan into operation:

'There's a car being towed from the car park,' he shouted.

'An ambulance just drove by!'

'Looks like the Andersons have people round,' he called out.

'Matt's out on his bike and his mum is telling him off'

'Looks as if the Sanders are going into full isolation!'

'Jason has had his skate board taken off him'

After a few moments he announced, 'The Coopers are having sex!!'

Startled, his mum and dad shot up in bed!

Dad cautiously called out, 'How do you know they're having sex?'

'Jimmy Cooper is standing on his balcony with a Mars Bar!!'

.....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" ...)