

Hi everyone

Welcome to the Biggin Hill Users Database November Newsletter....

JB's November edition of the Biggin Hill Airport "BUGLE" is also now available online on the Social Club's website at <http://www.bigginhillclub.co.uk> ***As always it is NOT included here - to view it, once in the Bugle section, via the link on the homepage, click on the appropriate month's link.*** As always, please keep those stories coming in for inclusion in future issues. (JB's direct email address is johnbryan13@sky.com, or you can send items directly to me to pass on: john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk)

EMAIL ADDRESSES

Welcome to the new Database members who may be receiving this regular Newsletter for the first time. A full and current list of member names can be seen at <http://www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk> Please remember to tell us if you change your email address. If you know others who are not members but are eligible to join (ie. if they currently fly from the airport, or work there, or ever have done so) please let me know or tell them about us – it is, of course, free.

REX NICHOLLS

It is with great personal sadness that I have to report the death of our friend, and great flying instructor, Rex Nicholls.

Rex, who was my own original flying instructor back in the early 60's, had been quite ill for some time. He returned home quite recently from hospital to be cared for by his wife, Janet, assisted by Hospice staff. Rex, aged 87, passed away quietly in his sleep at 4:30am on Sunday 26th October 2014.

Rex learnt to fly at Redhill in 1950 with the late Jean Bird, a former ATA pilot. Rex and others formed the Experimental Flying Group, which was set up to make it possible for people to learn to fly on a relatively small budget. The Group subsequently moved to Croydon Airport, where they used publicly available facilities, like the Ministry of Aviation briefing offices, to run their services, having no premises of their own initially.

When Croydon Airport was closed, and all small aircraft were forced to relocate to Biggin Hill, Rex became the first to land there as a part of that move on 3rd January 1959 in Miles Hawk Trainer (commonly known as a Magister) G-AKAS. (interestingly, Rex recalls seeing a young lad that day peering over the fence at the arriving aircraft - me – and of course I later joined his Group and became his student!).

Rex was a keen member of Experimental (often called "EFG"), and was not only an experienced and knowledgeable instructor, but also an Instructors Instructor and a PPL Examiner. He was responsible for training and granting many of the early Private Pilots at Biggin Hill their licences, many of whom went on to bigger and greater achievements in aviation.

Amassing some 16,000 hours of flying prior to ceasing following a gardening accident in 2001, Rex was a member of the Surrey and Kent Flying Club Chipmunk Kings Cup air racing team in 1966, when his team mate, John Miles, won the event. Rex also had the honour of introducing His Highness Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh, to flying the Rollason Condor in 1967.

In March 2007, in conjunction with his wife and JB, I was able to organise a surprise 80th birthday party for him with great support from Joe Merchant at the Pilots Pals bar on the airport. The surprise was complete, and a great day was had by all, with a great deal of reminiscing. The following day, I arranged for Rex to have a flight around Biggin, which was very kindly provided by Edwin Brenninkmeyer in his Cessna 210 (chosen to make his access easy bearing in mind Rex's

physical disabilities). As a part of arranging this party, I sent a rather tongue in cheek invitation to Price Phillip – clearly he was unable to attend, but did take the trouble to write back confirming that he clearly recalled his flight in the Condor with Rex..

Whilst not entirely unexpected, Rex's passing has stunned many of us at Biggin Hill – so many owe him so much.

Rex leaves wife Janet, children Ivor, Clive, Laura, and Gemma, and five grand-children.

The funeral will be held on 14th November 2014 at midday at Beckenham Crematorium, Elmers End Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 4TD and will be followed by a gathering at The Beckenham Cricket Club, Foxgrove Road, Beckenham, BR3 5AS. All who knew Rex are welcome to attend. The family request no flowers please, but donations to St Christopher's Hospice (envelopes will be available at the service for these)

The family also ask that anyone with interesting photo's or memories of Rex bring them to the post funeral gathering, which they hope will be a light hearted celebration of Rex's life.

If it is your intention to attend the funeral and after, please could you email me with name and number of attendees (john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk) so the family has some idea of number to cater for. Thank you.

PHIL STOKES

For those real oldies at Biggin Hill, I have to inform you of the passing of another old Biggin Hill'ite, Phil Stokes.

Phil was the co-pilot/navigator on the Decca Percival Prince in the early 60's with Captain Bill Poulter, and subsequently also on the Decca/Racal Jetstream aircraft until his ultimate retirement. During his time flying with Bill, he also did some freelance flying for Euroair on their Islander to increase his pilot experience. His son also mentions that, during the late 60's, Phil was also often away in the States and did some flying with the Flying Tiger Airline shipping troops to Vietnam and back, also to enhance his experience.

Phil passed away, after a short illness, on the 15th October 2014 at the age of 84.

For those that may remember Phil, his funeral is to be held on Wednesday 5th November at Tatsfield Church at 12 o'clock and the family confirm that anyone who knew him is welcome to attend. Flowers are for family only, but should anyone wish to do so, a donation to a suitable cancer charity would be appropriate.

AIRPORT CHANGE PROPOSAL CONSULTATIONS

As mentioned last month by Will Curtis, the airport has, during October, carried out one of the biggest public consultations ever conducted in the Borough.

With 180,000 leaflets dropped through virtually every letterbox in the London Borough of Bromley, a team of canvassers knocking on doors for over three weeks, and a Visitor Information Centre on the airport for a week for drop-in visitors, plus a stand at the Bromley "Glades" shopping Centre, together with major articles in all local Newspapers, I think it unlikely that any potentially affected person in the Borough can claim to have been kept in the dark.

For many of the reasons outlined by Will in his last Newsletter entry, I personally was quite worried about the airport being forced by Government to take on the role of a Satellite Airport for Gatwick with scheduled service aircraft. As a result, I volunteered to help staff their Visitor Centre and

Glades stand to help explain the proposals to increase the operational hours slightly, and the reasons behind this to concerned residents.

Interestingly, the majority of people who would perhaps initially have been hostile to any changes at the airport, seemed to change their stance when they were able to discuss their concerns. My impression of the consultation process is that there is considerably more support for the airport than opposition, but of course time will tell once the full results are analysed.

But well done for the airport taking the proposals to the public. The airport has historically been quite bad at communicating outside their boundaries, and that has perhaps clouded resident's opinions of the airport as a whole. The new "user friendly" approach initially introduced by Jenny Munro, and continued by Will Curtis, has clearly paid massive dividends. People that I spoke to were most impressed with recent the recent more open communication from the management, and seem to be reacting accordingly.

THE 2003 BUMP REUNION

Following on from last month's publication of the video of the 1998 Bump Reunion, which seems to have been so well received by so many of you, I have now uploaded another Video.

This one is the 2003 Bump Reunion, held on 6th September 2003 in the Interflight hangar. It was a follow on from the 1998 one as a result of much pressure from people on the database that had become more established by then. It was at this reunion that we first saw the formal "Roll of Honour" remembering the names of so many old friends who were no longer with us. That initial Roll of Honour was then uploaded to the BigginHillReunited.co.uk website, and has been constantly updated since then.

With most of the population starting to embrace email and later Facebook, this enabled us to keep in touch without the previously high postal costs associated with communicating with the membership.

Indeed, by January 2006, sufficient members were actively "online" that we were able to start publishing JB's "Biggin Hill Bugle" every month online, rather than just leaving printed copies in the bar. My own Newsletter, originally only sent out when something serious occurred (a death or a social function notification), became a regular monthly Newsletter from December 2007

For those who would like to view the video of the 2003 Bump Reunion, please go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTkrh6Ckwgs>

More reminiscing video's to be slowly released month by month in the future (including the hour long "photo album featured on the large screens at the 2003 Reunion, plus various old video sequences featuring the early Air Fair, Bill Webb, Will Curtis' displays, and others.....)

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CLUBS & BUSINESSES

If you would like me to include your business in the Newsletter, either on a regular basis, or just occasionally, please drop me an email with your contact details and I'll be in touch directly. (John Willis - john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk)

FALCON FLIGHT ACADEMY (inc EFG) & FALCON FLIGHT SERVICES

Happy Halloween folks!

Well it has been a mixed month hasn't it?! Nonetheless this month we have started 2 FIC courses and 1 CPL as well as all our regular training! The market may not be huge at the moment but people are certainly recognising EFG and Biggin as premier places to get your qualifications.

The Arrow has been doing a fair bit of flying both Dual and Solo. If you wish to have a check out please call the school! As I write this I can see people waiting for the clouds to lift to go on a Trial Lesson, a FIC student briefing away, and a Multi Renewal being prepped. So whatever you wish to do please let EFG/ S&K and Falcon do it for you!

Christmas is fast approaching meaning some lovely Night Flying opportunities, we are as ever open to taking your requests for initial Night Qualifications as well as some Night Refresher training. Again Ops is waiting for your call on 01959 540 400 / 540 054!

If this cloud base really does inhibit your flying then pop by and discuss your IMC or IR!

All in all folks, let's hope for some clear skies and calm air. Stay blessed, keep cruising, and be happy!

Anoop Singh Bamrah

MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF WILL CURTIS

We have been extremely busy over the past month with our public consultation. This closed on 24th October and was very successful indeed with over 15,000 responses received. We are now processing the data and will publish the results in the near future. Thank you to all of you who supported our plans, which we believe provide a sustainable future for the airport.

The airport Safety and Noise Review Board (SANARB) has now agreed its Terms of Reference and these will be published on the BHAL website in the near future. The next meeting of the SANARB will look at noise complaints and safety reports that have been received since the previous meeting and will begin to address these reports and to decide how best to respond with the aim of preventing similar occurrences in the future.

The new Airport Noise Action Plan will soon be published and will include some "no fly" zones for light aircraft and some revised helicopter and light aircraft VFR routings aimed at avoiding, as far as possible, noise nuisance on the ground. This won't be any great surprise to most of you as these areas are largely familiar to long time Biggin Hill based pilots. Jet departure and arrival routes are also being revised in order to reduce noise impact on the ground. If we are to maintain our free use of the airport, we will need to keep noise nuisance to a minimum or we may find unpleasant limitations being imposed upon us by the Council.

We are looking forward to remembrance Sunday. The customary service will be held in St Georges Chapel along with a Spitfire fly past. There will then be a wreath laying ceremony at the Biggin Hill War Memorial. I attended last year and it is really a chance to remember those who gave so much to ensure that we live in peace as we do today. Sadly I will be absent that weekend as I am accompanying my wife to Brazil where she is racing in an Ironman triathlon event that has been planned since early last year. It's a tough job but someone has to do it!

Best regards
Will Curtis

MD – Biggin Hill Airport Ltd

BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT SOCIAL CLUB

Thank you to all those who continue to support the club, it is much appreciated. Full details can be found at www.bigginhillclub.co.uk When sending anything to us by post, please remember to use the new address on the site...

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....)

QUOTE.....

As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery near a very small township way out in the New South Wales Australian outback.

As I was not familiar with the area, I got lost and, being a typical man, I didn't stop for directions. There was nobody around to ask anyway.

I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There were only the diggers and crew left and they were eating lunch. I felt badly and apologized to the men for being late.

I went to the side of the grave and looked down and the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play.

The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I've never played before for this homeless man. And as I played "Amazing Grace", the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together.

When I finished, I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car. Though my head was hung low, my heart was full.

As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I've never seen anything like that before, and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."

Apparently, I'm still lost it's a man thing.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A mother and her 5-year-old son were flying Qantas from Sydney to Auckland

The son (who had been looking out the window) turned to his mother and asked, "If big dogs have baby dogs and big cats have baby cats, why don't big planes have baby planes?"

The mother, who couldn't think of an answer, told her son to ask the flight attendant to explain it to him.

So the little guy walks up to the galley and asks the flight attendant, "If big dogs have baby dogs, and big cats have baby cats, why don't big planes have baby planes?"

The flight attendant responded, "Did your mother tell you to ask me that?"

The boy said, "Yes, she did".

"Well, then, please tell your mother that there are no baby planes because Qantas always pulls out on time and ask her explain that to you."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Bert was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business.

When he found out he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father died, he decided he needed a wife with which to share his fortune. One evening at an investment meeting he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away.

"I may look like just an ordinary man," he said to her, "but in just a few years, my father will die, and I'll inherit \$200 million."

Impressed, the woman obtained his business card and three days later . . . she became his stepmother.

Women are so much better at financial planning than men.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Recently, I was diagnosed with A.A.A.D.D. - Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder. This is how it manifests itself:

I decide to water my garden.

As I turn on the hose in the driveway, I look over at my car and decide it needs washing.

As I head towards the garage, I notice post on the porch table that I picked up from the postman earlier.

I decide to go through it before I wash the car.

I put my car keys on the table, put the junk mail in the recycling box under the table, and notice that the recycling box is full.

So, I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the recycling first.

But then I think, since I'm going to be near the post box when I take out the recycling paper anyway, I may as well pay the bills first.

I take my cheque book off the table and notice that there is only one cheque left.

My extra cheques are in the desk in my study, so I go into the house to my desk where I find the cup of coffee I'd been drinking.

I'm going to look for my cheques but first I need to push the coffee aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over.

The coffee is getting cold, and I decide to make another cup..

As I head toward the kitchen with the cold coffee, a vase of flowers on the worktop catches my eye - the flowers need water.

I put the coffee on the worktop and discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning.

I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers..

I put the glasses back down on the worktop, fill a container with water and suddenly spot the TV Remote Control - Someone left it on the kitchen table.

I realise that tonight when we go to watch TV, I'll be looking for the remote, but I won't remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers.

I pour some water in the flowers, but quite a bit of it spills on the floor.

So, I put the remote back on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill.

Then, I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day:

The car isn't washed

The bills aren't paid

There is a cold cup of coffee sitting on the kitchen work-surface

The flowers don't have enough water,

There is still only 1 cheque in my cheque book,

I can't find the remote,

I can't find my glasses,

And I don't remember what I did with the car keys.

Then, when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all bloody day and I'm really tired.

I realise this is a serious problem, and I'll try to get some help for it, but first I'll check my e-mail.....

Do me a favour. Forward this message to everyone you know, Because I can't remember who the hell I've sent it to.

Don't laugh - if this isn't you yet, your day is coming!!

.....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"...)