

Hi everyone

Welcome to the September 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 don't get your Newsletter by email, you can always view it online, as well as any 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](http://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!)*

## **AUGUST WEATHER**

The weather in August has in the main, been OK for us for light aircraft operations, albeit several days with strong gusty winds right across the runway (and absolutely perfect for the now closed runway 29/11 – shame!)

But at least we can fly when the conditions are suitable, unlike the few months during full lockdown for Covid-19

Here's hoping for some good weather for September.

## **GARY DUNCAN**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> August, we received the sad news that our friend, and long term Biggin Hill'ite, Gary Duncan, had passed away following a battle with an illness.

Apart from his very obvious love for his family, Gary loved motor sport as well as aviation, and was often seen racing around in his Caterham, and his Lotus. Sharing his time between Brands Hatch and Biggin Hill, Gary was very much a fixture at the airfield, working during the 50 years as an engineer for such companies as Fairflight (with their DH Doves and Herons), Cobby (where he learned what eventually became very much a speciality – restoration of historic types of aircraft), Michael Dunkerley (who built what is now Shipping and Airline's hangar) and subsequently Peter Greenyer, who subsequently bought Shipping from Michael, where Gary was able to enjoy his passion working on Peter's amazing fleet of historic and vintage aircraft.

During these years, Gary bought and operated a number of Cessna 152's, most of which were leased to various flying clubs at Biggin and elsewhere. Unfortunately, Gary suffered from the fate that many aircraft owners have, when one of the biggest clubs that he leased his aircraft to went bust leaving Gary to pick up the tab for their financial disaster. But Gary being Gary, picked himself up and sold many of the aircraft, eventually just retaining one – G-BSFR – which he operated himself via a group of private hirers. (never to be placed at risk again of others leaving him with their debts to fund!)

Gary was a truly lovely man, well respected by all who knew him. He was a great engineer and an enthusiastic restorer of some wonderful types of older aircraft.

Gary's funeral was held at the Shipping and Airline's hangar on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the funeral itself was restricted to close family and friends who were seated inside the hangar. Many other friends who wanted to show their respects were able to attend a separate fenced off area outside to open hangar doors, suitably socially distanced of course.

Gary is survived by his lovely family, wife Sue, and their daughter Georgina (who gave a very emotional address for her father), and son Michael.

The funeral service was video streamed so that friends who were unable to attend because of restricted numbers could participate in spirit. That video can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/Q3IXKRAHqAE>

Gary's name has been added to the Roll of Honour at [www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk](http://www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk)

He will always be remembered by all his many airport friends - sadly missed - R.I.P. Gary

### **PAMELA ELLES**

As we reported in the last Newsletter, our friend and old Biggin Hill'ite, Pam Elles, sadly passed away in July.

Her family funeral was held on the 13th August at Greenacres Colney Wood Norwich. Because of the Covid-19 restrictions, it was impossible for any old Biggin Hill friends to attend, but it was streamed by video, so that her many friends could be there with her in spirit.

That video of the service can be viewed at: [www.obitus.com](http://www.obitus.com) and log in using Username: Poqo8698 and the Password: 310961 – it is only available to view or download until the end of the day on 9<sup>th</sup> September

One of our old Biggin Hill'ites, Dez Northover, kindly arranged with the family to attend on behalf of us all to represent the airport, for which we are, I'm sure, very grateful.

Pam will always be remembered by all her many airport friends - sadly missed - R.I.P. Pam

### **RICHARD OLIVE**

Sadly, on 27th June we lost another old friend of the airport, Richard Olive following a brave fight against a serious illness. Richard passed away peacefully being cared for in Sundridge Court Care Home in Bromley aged 77.

A long-term resident of Biggin Hill, following an apprenticeship, he became a builder working for a number of local firms, before becoming self-employed.

As a teenager Richard rode motorcycles, the most affordable transport at the time. He first rode a Matchless but is better known for owning an Ariel Four Square. He was a familiar face at both The Salt Box and Nightingale Cafes and at Brands Hatch. Football and planes were Richards great passions growing up in an RAF Village with fighter jets flying low in and out of the airfield. He would never miss a Battle of Britain Air Show or Air Fair.

Richard was a founder member of the Biggin Hill Battle of Britain Supporters Club and volunteered tirelessly on the committee raising funds for a memorial centre to the most famous fighter station in the world. Through this he made the acquaintance of all the remaining pilots who flew out of Biggin Hill and met each one of The Few.

During the latter part of his life he found great interest and satisfaction from his involvement with Air Search working for the Emergency Services flying out of Biggin Hill and putting on exhibitions around the County.

His name has been added to the Roll of Honour at [www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk](http://www.bigginhillreunited.co.uk)

He will be sadly missed by his family and friends and remembered with affection by so many local people. - R.I.P. Richard

## **ME & MY HEAD INJURY**

As most of you will be aware, I suffered a fall in a shower back in August last year, which caused me to suffer a severe head injury. This injury, from which I was apparently very lucky to survive, meant that my aviation medical was suspended, clearly preventing me from flying at all. A very difficult situation for me to actually accept after flying pretty much constantly for some 58 or so years, as I'm sure most of you will appreciate.....

As those of you who are members of the BigginHillReunited Facebook group will have seen, a week or so ago, following several MRI scans and Neurology consultations, the CAA head of medical assessment formally re-issued my medical to allow me to fly my aircraft solo, or with a safety pilot if I wished to carry a passenger. He simultaneously agreed that, from the beginning of September, the restrictions will be removed, then allowing me to return to instructing.

Having a year of enforced grounding, I can't tell you how relieved I am to be able to return to the air again. I'd just like to thank you all sincerely for your concerns and best wishes whilst this problem was being re-assessed. Thank you all so much.

## **TEMPORARY ENGLISH CHANNEL DANGER AREAS**

For those of us that fly regularly across the English Channel to Calais and Le Touquet and other destinations, please be aware of the revised Temporary Danger Areas that will affect us for the month of September. If you haven't seen the details, please use the following URL:

[http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/aip/current/misc/BRIEFING\\_SHEET\\_ENGLISH\\_CHANNEL\\_V3.pdf](http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/aip/current/misc/BRIEFING_SHEET_ENGLISH_CHANNEL_V3.pdf)

Although the detail is, of course, important, the final page is a chart illustrating the individual areas, together with their respective restricted altitudes (which are typically Surface to 3,000 or 4,500 feet)

## **SEPTEMBER BIGGIN HILL POSTED FUEL PRICES**

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

£1:38.5 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)

£0:49.75 per litre for Jet A1

## **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](mailto:john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk) )

## **ALOUETTE FLYING CLUB**

You can go flying without the threat of quarantine on return! Try Biggin to the South Coast and back. Or perhaps visit one of the many airfields in easy reach for lunch. Whichever you choose; do it before winter creeps up on us.

Simply email [bookings@alouette.org.uk](mailto:bookings@alouette.org.uk) to get yourself up in the sky!

Our clubhouse and aircraft are cleaned and sanitised over and over again before and after use.

Sanitiser and cleaning materials for surfaces are provided for you. Headphone ear covers and microphone socks are changed every pilot.

Our booking systems manager will put you in touch with an instructor who you can liaise with before arrival.

We had our first club social with Covid-19 restrictions; and it was well attended and easy to conform. We have a one-way system through the clubhouse, and we keep our distance from each other. Face masks are more than appreciated; but don't try and drink beer when wearing one.

You can also find out more by coming to our clubhouse bar this Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> at about 7:30 for 8pm.

I hope to see you there.

Regards  
Bruno Bruniges - Club Chairman

### **MONTHLY NEWS FROM THE CEO's OFFICE**

The recent increase in infection rates across the world continues to highlight the unpredictable nature of the virus and prolongs the uncertainty around the rate of economic recovery, especially given that the government has confirmed that the economy is now technically in recession. The Airport remains cautiously optimistic; however, the next few months remain important to position the Airport through the winter months. Whilst I am pleased that activity at Biggin Hill is slowly returning to reasonable levels, the impact of the crisis is clearly deepening across the Aviation industry and the continuing quarantine regulations running into winter will do little to help.

Notwithstanding the continuing challenges presented by the current quarantine regulations, this has been an extremely busy month for the Airport. Traffic levels have increased throughout June, July and now August and provides a clear indication of the resilience of the business aviation sector and the latent demand within the market. As confidence in the scheduled sector remains low, many corporate travellers appear to be looking at business aviation to provide a safe and secure air travel environment.

Developments at the Airport continue at pace and everyone can now see the full scale of the Bombardier hangar development, which remains on target for completion by April 2022. Again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all tenants and partners for their continued cooperation and understanding as this development progresses. The new ILS will be installed now in late September/October and, once flight checked, will be fully operational by late October. Finally, the Airport continues to investigate options for the resurfacing of taxiway Delta.

Over the past 6 months the Airport has focused on improving compliance with our published noise abatement procedures. I have been impressed and remain grateful for the support we have received from the light Aviation Community in particular, certainly as it regards Biggin Hill and Tatsfield Noise Sensitive Areas. That said, the Airport continues to receive noise complaints regarding Keston, Farnborough Park and Downe and I would ask the Airport for their continuing support in ensuring we respect residents who live in those communities. I would like to thank those members of the Light Aviation Steering Group who have provided feedback on our current Noise Abatement Procedures and I will be continuing to engage as we review our Noise Action Plan.

Finally, I hope you and your family 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](http://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](mailto: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 –please stay well and 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.... Please keep them coming by email to [john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk](mailto:john@bigginhillreunited.co.uk) .

### QUOTE.....

My wife's been hinting she wants something black and lacy for her birthday. so, I've got her a pair of football boots.

My wife asked if she could have a little peace and quiet while she cooked the dinner, so I took the batteries out of the smoke alarm.

My wife apologised for the first time ever today. She said she's sorry she ever married me.

My wife said I needed to be more in touch with my feminine side, so I crashed the car, burnt the dinner and ignored her all day for no reason.

.....UNQUOTE

### QUOTE.....

Mummy, what were you doing bouncing on Daddy's stomach last night?

I have to do that, or Daddy's belly gets very fat. Bouncing keeps him skinny

That's not going to work

Why not?

Because the babysitter keeps blowing him back up again

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A nun is Confessing to her Mother Superior. " Mother, I have sinned. I used some really foul and horrible language this week and I feel absolutely terrible about it."

"When did you use this awful language?" asks the elder.

"Well, I was golfing with the parish priest and it was a beautiful day. We were discussing God and his wonders when I hit an incredible drive that looked like it was going to go over 280 yards, but it struck a phone line that was hanging over the fairway and fell straight down to the ground after going only about 100 yards."

"Is that when you swore?"

"No, Mother," says the nun. "After that, a squirrel ran out of the bushes and grabbed my ball in its mouth and began to run away."

"Is THAT when you swore?" asks the Mother Superior again.

"Well, no", says the nun. "You see, as the squirrel was running, an eagle came down out of the sky, grabbed the squirrel in his talons and began to fly away!"

"Is THAT when you swore?" asks the amazed elder nun.

"No, not yet. As the eagle carried the squirrel away in its claws, it flew near the green and the squirrel dropped my ball."

"Did you swear THEN?" asked Mother Superior, becoming impatient.

"No, because the ball fell on a big rock, bounced over the sand trap, rolled onto the green, and stopped about six inches from the hole."

The two nuns were silent for a moment.

Then Mother Superior sighed and said, "You missed the f.....ing putt, didn't you?"

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

A 54-year-old woman had a heart attack and was taken to the hospital.

While on the operating table she had a near death experience. Seeing God, she asked "Is my time up?"

God said, "No, you have another 43 years, 2 months and 8 days to live."

Upon recovery, the woman decided to stay in the hospital and have a face-lift, liposuction, breast implants and a tummy tuck. She even had someone come in and change her hair colour and brighten her teeth! Since she had so much more time to live, she figured she might as well make the most of it.

After her last operation, she was released from the hospital. While crossing the street on her way home, she was killed by an ambulance.

Arriving in front of God, she demanded, "I thought you said I had another 43 years? Why

didn't you pull me from out of the path of the ambulance?"

God replied: "I didn't bloody recognize you."

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Picked up a hitchhiker. Seemed like a nice guy.

After a few miles, he asked me if I wasn't afraid that he might be a serial killer.

I told him that the chances of two serial killers being in the same car were extremely unlikely.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Not a joke, but interesting nevertheless.....

### Railroad Tracks

The U.S. Standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches.

That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used?

Because that's the way they built them in England, and English expatriates designed the U.S. Railroads.

Why did the English build them like that?

Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did 'they' use that gauge then?

Because the people who built the tram ways used the same jigs and tools that they had used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing?

Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So, who built those old rutted roads?

Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (including England) for their legions. Those roads have been used ever since.

And the ruts in the roads?

Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels.

Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Therefore, the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot.

In other words, bureaucracies live forever.

So, the next time you are handed a specification, procedure, or process, and wonder, 'What horse's ass came up with this?', you may be exactly right.

Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses.

Now, the twist to the story:

When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, you will notice that there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank.

These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah.

The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit larger, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site.

The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel.

The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's ass.

And you thought being a horse's ass wasn't important!

Now you know, Horses' Asses control almost everything.

Explains a whole lot of stuff, doesn't it??!

.....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"...) )