

Hi everyone

Welcome to the September 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 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!)

AUGUST WEATHER

In theory August should really be the height of our Summer – maybe someone ought to have told the man up there, because this August was far from a proper Summer – whilst we have had some pleasant days, the weather has been very mixed with periods of rain and drizzle, low cloud and poor visibility, and when that wasn't the case, we've had some significantly strong winds – often that would have been perfect if we had still got runway 11/29 to help cope with the crosswinds.

I think I've given up predicting the onset of summer flying weather! It will be, what it will be – but let's hope we may have some decent flying weather before the Autumn and then Winter starts to arrive again.

Notwithstanding the changeable weather, the clubs and schools, and of course private owners, have done their very best to get airborne whenever they can.....

RALPH SCOTT

On 23rd August Biggin Hill Airport sadly lost one of the nicest of the old school aviators, Ralph Scott.

Ralph, who would have been 94 at the end of August this year, was one of the the owners and the MD of the very successful Express Aviation Services (who occupied the hangar opposite the self-refuelling point that is now RAS Aviation) for many years. Express was a main Piper Dealer, and they ran one of Biggin Hill's best and most reliable aircraft maintenance operations.

Starting outside aviation, he was, with Bob King, one of the two owners of Lec Refrigeration Services in South-East London, that covered servicing and support over most of London and the South East of the UK for the manufacturer Lec, who were based in Bognor.

Ralph subsequently followed his ambition, and learnt to fly at Surrey and Kent Flying Club in it's heyday. (in those days I was a controller at Biggin, and Ralph would spend many days sitting in the Tower while I was on duty watching and learning from all that was going on at the airport – Ralph and I became, and remained, great friends until the end.)

After gaining his PPL, Ralph bought a beautiful Piper Comanche, the fastest of the original Piper complex single engine aircraft. He flew it regularly with his young family all around the UK and Europe.

Following on from that he subsequently flew extensively in a Twin Comanche, and along with another old Biggin Hill'ite, Stanley Ingram, they flew it across Europe and through Africa to South Africa, and return. In those days an amazing trip...

Eventually, following the death of Ray Hawkins, who owned Aviation Communications (AvCom) with Tom Cummings, in the same hangar, Ralph, along with Bob King, John Richardson, and Nick Lilley, took over the operation and dealerships and renamed it Express Aviation. The

business expanded quite dramatically and maintained many busy Charter and Commuter operation's aircraft (including my own Chieftain, Cessna 310's, and Embraer Bandeirante's). Ralph eventually sold the business when he retired in around 1985.

Ralph then moved to live for some years in Spain until relatively recent times, whilst his UK home remained in Chislehurst when he was in the UK.

Sadly Ralph's wife, Madelaine, died around 6 weeks ago after a spell in hospital, and clearly it had a very marked effect on Ralph's health. Whilst being quite frail, which is not unexpected when someone is in their 90's, Ralph was still in quite good humour and loved nothing more than reminiscing about the early days at Biggin Hill and about the many wonderful people he had met. I personally spent quite a lot of time with him in the last couple of months endeavouring to cheer him up and get him remembering all those flying types from the early days.

His health deteriorated quite rapidly towards the end and he was admitted into hospital on the morning of the 18th August, where he sadly passed away in the evening of 23rd August with his surviving family all present at his bedside.

A total and absolute gentleman, loved and well respected by almost all who ever met him. Ralph will be missed by us all

R.I.P. Ralph – forever in my mind – your many friends will never forget you....

Ralph's name has, of course, been added to the Biggin Hill Reunited Roll of Honour....

UK COVID RECOVERY AND TESTING

The UK Government's "Roadmap out of Lockdown" seems to change every five minutes depending on what individual politicians and Government Ministers want to do for themselves, rather than what is actually going on with Covid.

Our Government seems to be using pretty much everything in their power to make foreign holidays virtually impossible by virtue of costs and restrictions. It couldn't possibly be an attempt to make everyone spend their money in the UK rather than abroad would it??

In addition to that, here in the UK the required Covid testing regime for travel seems to change by the day, and always be far more restrictive than virtually every other Country around the World – and most certainly, the UK's costs for Covid testing associated with foreign travel is certainly amongst the most costly in the world.... Well that will stop them, won't it!!!

It really is time the UK Government took the reins properly and only appointed and approved test providers who can give the required service at a maximum price dictated by Government that doesn't make the UK look a bit of a joke.... (many countries charge as little as £10 or £20 or equivalent for a simple Rapid Flow "Antigen" test, and even £30 to £40 for a PCR. Compare that to the UK where many "approved" providers charge anything up to £80 or £90 for an Antigen test, and up to £300 or £400 in some extreme cases for a PCR test!).

I realise this may be considered a bit of a personal rant! It is! But someone has to start telling our quite lax politicians what sort of things need a more sensible and practical approach, without encouraging the population to just start to rebel and ignore Westminster...

Whilst I'm being critical, I do actually think our Government has basically done quite well to control the pandemic, but they do need to be more proactive in rectifying matters such as testing costs via any Government approved providers than they have done in the past. If the providers don't like it, then they should lose their approval.

OK – rant over..... (I'd run out of things to write this month, so it seemed worth doing this. Hope I haven't upset too many people!)

FLYING CLUBS AND SCHOOLS

In spite of the vary variable weather, Biggin Hill's Clubs and Schools have done everything they can to get flight training back into some semblance of what it used to be.

We all hope this general aviation ability to fly and resume courses will continue, whenever the weather permits, and that Covid will not prevent that from happening.

This return to a form of normality after so long is desired by most of the people I speak to, (albeit not as it was pre-pandemic of course). All everyone wants is a resume to something similar to a normal life again after all the uncertainty and restrictions.

Please do enjoy your flying – but please be careful and sensible too – protect yourselves and others from this horrible Pandemic.

FANCY A SHARE IN AN AIRCRAFT?

How do you fancy part-owning an aircraft?

Share for Sale in BO209 Monsun - Registration: G-AYPE, which is based at Shipping and Airlines

Share Price £2500

Please contact via email Papaechogroup@googlemail.com

Or call 07768 356245 for more details

BACK TO FLYING AGAIN

Many of you have been enquiring about my head injury recovery in recent months.

As most of you will know, on at the end of August 2019 I suffered a serious head injury when I slipped in a shower. Whilst I was issued with a restricted Class 2 and an unrestricted LAPL one year after the accident, I'm really pleased to say that I am now back to a fully unrestricted Class 2 medical and am therefore able to return to instructing again.

I can't tell you how relieved I am, and how much everyone's support has helped drive me forward.

Thank you all – and I'm sure we will meet again on the airwaves once I return to the UK from Portugal in a few weeks...

SEPTEMBER BIGGIN HILL POSTED FUEL PRICES

The "posted" Biggin Hill Airport fuel prices, excluding VAT, for the calendar month of September 2021 are:

£1:68.3 per litre for 100LL Avgas if supplied from the Fuel Bowser (if uplifted using fuel account card Only from the Self-Refuel pumps = minus 5p per litre)
NOTE the increased discount that will apply from 1st September

£0:65.8 per litre for Jet A1 (or £1.08 per litre for "Sustainable Aviation Fuel"!))

SPECIAL NOTES: Users are advised that credit and debit cards can no longer be used at the self-refuel pumps. This situation would appear to be permanent now, so if you use self-refuelling, please make sure you have your airport H-TEC fuel account card with you when you go there. (or else, you will have to go over to the Main Terminal apron to uplift fuel from the bowsers).

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

It's been another busy month here at Alouette.

Despite the weather not quite being able to make up its mind, we have managed plenty of flying and our students are all progressing nicely.

We also held our much-anticipated BBQ on the 21st. This was the first event we have been able to hold since the pandemic began and it could not have been a better day. The food was delicious, lots of new and old faces came along and even the rain stayed away for us. It was wonderful to see everyone catching up after such a long time apart, so a huge thank you to all those who came.

It put me into quite a reflective mood on how the club is going. Alouette flying club has been at Biggin Hill, in one guise or another, since 1959. Through a variety of factors there was a genuine possibility last winter that Alouette may close and a long chapter of Biggin Hill history would come to a sad end.

Faced with this challenge we rolled up our sleeves and seeing everybody come together at the BBQ really showed me that we seem, thankfully, to have survived the worst of it.

The future for Alouette once again looks bright.

Stuart Taylor
Club Chairman

MONTHLY NEWS FROM THE CEO'S OFFICE

With the complete lifting of restrictions and the return of mass public events, I would have hoped to start this newsletter update in the belief that we can say COVID is behind us; however, the increase in infections and isolation occurrences suggest otherwise. The lifting of travel restrictions and the increase in the number of countries on the green list does give rise to greater optimism although continued vigilance remains the order of the day.

We have seen a steady increase in traffic movements over the past few months and August looks like another record month. Again, the limited return of US and long-haul traffic have meant that traffic is predominantly in the lower weight categories and therefore the economic challenges remain.

Investment in infrastructure and facilities continues despite some supply chain challenges arising from BREXIT and the shortage of HVG drivers. The Bombardier hangar remains on target for an early completion in December of this year. With the completion of the construction contract for the Hotel, the community should see visible construction starting in the next few weeks, with completion planned for late 2022. Discussions continue regarding the construction of additional hangers and the Airport is in the final stages of approving the works to enhance Churchill way. Finally, the Airport continues to work with the CAA regarding the 03 RNAV approach approval and the progression of the Air Space Change for the 21 RNAV overlay.

In the last newsletter update, I advised the airport community that the Airport had recently completed its 5-year review of the Noise Action Plan as part of its commitment within the Deed of Variation to increase operating hours in 2016. I am pleased to advise everyone that the engagement with the key stakeholders of the SANARB, BHACC Noise and Safety Sub

Committee, the BHACC and LBB is now complete and that the review was finalised this month. The final version is posted on the Airport's website.

Finally, the Airport continues to engage with the London Borough of Bromley and I would like to reiterate, as one of the largest employers in Bromley, we remain committed to working with the Council to ensure that local people can continue to benefit from new jobs and investment around the Airport.

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.

Enjoy your flying during September - 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 man in a pub asks the man standing next to him, "Does your dog bite?"

"No", came the reply.

Man reached down to stroke the dog and it bites him.

"I thought you said your dog didn't bite?"

The man replied, "It's not my dog!"

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

On their first date the man asks his companion if she'd like a drink with dinner.

"Oh no, what would I tell my Sunday School class?", she said.
Later, he offered her a cigarette.

"Oh no, what would I tell my Sunday School class?", she said again.

On the drive home, he saw a motel. Figuring he had nothing to lose, he asked her if she wanted to stop in there.

"OK", his date replied.

Shocked, he asked, "What will you tell your Sunday School class?"

"The same thing I always tell them,....."

"You don't have to drink or smoke to have a good time!"
.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

James Bond walks into a bar

He looks around and takes a seat next to a very attractive woman.

He gives her a quick glance then casually looks at his watch for a moment.

The woman notices this and asks, "Is your date running late?"

"No", he replies, "Q has just given me this state-of-the-art watch. I was just testing it"

The intrigued woman asks, "A state-of-the-art watch? What's so special about it?"

Bond explains, "it uses alpha waves to talk to me telepathically"

The lady says, "what's it telling you now?"

"Well it says you're not wearing any panties"

The woman giggles and replies, "well it must be broken because I *am* wearing panties!"

Bond smirks, taps his watch and says, "Bloody things an hour fast!"
.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Three dogs were sitting in the waiting room at the vet's when they struck up a conversation. (as dogs do!!)

The black Labrador turned to the yellow Labrador and said, "So why are you here?"

The yellow Lab replied, "I'm a pisser. I piss on everything.... The sofa, the curtains, the cat, the kids. But the final straw was last night when I pissed in the middle of my owner's bed."

The black Lab said, "So what's the vet going to do?"

"Gonna cut my nuts off", came the reply from the yellow Lab. "They reckon it'll calm me down."

The Yellow Lab then turned to the Black Lab and asked, "So why are you here?"

The Black Lab said, "I'm a digger. I dig under fences, dig up flowers and trees, I dig just for the hell of it. When I'm inside, I dig up the carpets. But I went over the line last night when I dug a great big hole in my owners' couch."

"So what are they going to do to you?", the Yellow Lab enquired.

"Looks like I'm losing my nuts too," the dejected Black Lab said.

The Black Lab then turned to the Great Dane and asked, "Why are you here?"

"I'm a humper," said the Great Dane. "I'll hump anything. I'll hump the cat, a pillow, the table, fence posts, whatever. I want to hump everything I see. Yesterday my owner had just got out of the shower and was bending down to dry her toes, and I just couldn't help myself. I hopped on her back and started hammering away."

The Black and the Yellow Labs exchanged a sad glance and said, "So, it's nuts off for you too, huh?"

The Great Dane said, "No darling, apparently I'm here to get my nails clipped!"

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

Wisdom of Phyllis Diller

As your beauty fades, so will his eyesight.

Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance?

Cleaning your house while your kids are still growing up is like shovelling the sidewalk before it stops snowing.

The reason women don't play football is because 11 of them would never wear the same outfit in public.

Best way to get rid of kitchen odours: Eat out.

A bachelor is a guy who never made the same mistake once.

I want my children to have all the things I couldn't afford. Then I want to move in with them.

Most children threaten at times to run away from home. This is the only thing that keeps some parents going.

Any time three New Yorkers get into a cab without an argument, A bank has just been robbed.

We spend the first twelve months of our children's lives teaching them to walk and talk and the next twelve years telling them to sit down and shut up.

Burt Reynolds once asked me out. I was in his room.

What I don't like about office Christmas parties is looking for a job the next day.

The only time I ever enjoyed ironing was the day I accidentally got gin in the steam iron.

His finest hour lasted a minute and a half.

Old age is when the liver spots show through your gloves.

My photographs don't do me justice - they look just like me.

Tranquilizers work only if you follow the advice on the bottle - keep away from children.

I asked the waiter, 'Is this milk fresh?' He said, 'Lady, three hours ago it was grass.'

The reason the golf pro tells you to keep your head down is so you can't see him laughing.

You know you're old if they have discontinued your blood type.

.....UNQUOTE

QUOTE.....

RED SKELTON'S RECIPE FOR THE PERFECT MARRIAGE

1. Two times a week we go to a nice restaurant, have a little beverage, good food and companionship. She goes on Tuesdays, I go on Fridays.

2. We also sleep in separate beds. Hers is in California and mine is in Texas.

3. I take my wife everywhere, but she keeps finding her way back.

4. I asked my wife where she wanted to go for our anniversary. "Somewhere I haven't been in a long time!" she said. So I suggested the kitchen.

5. We always hold hands. If I let go, she shops.

6. She has an electric blender, electric toaster and electric bread maker. She said "There are too many gadgets, and no place to sit down!" So I bought her an electric chair.

7. My wife told me the car wasn't running well because there was water in the carburetor. I asked where the car was. She told me, "In the lake."

8. She got a mud pack and looked great for two days. Then the mud fell off.

9. She ran after the garbage truck, yelling, "Am I too late for the garbage?" The driver said, "No, jump in!".

10. Remember: Marriage is the number one cause of divorce.

11. I married Miss Right. I just didn't know her first name was 'Always'.

12. I haven't spoken to my wife in 18 months. I don't like to interrupt her.

13. The last fight was my fault though. My wife asked, "What's on the TV?" I said, "Dust!".

.....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"...))