

Hi everyone

Firstly, thanks to everyone who has sent kind words over the last couple of weeks, it is really good to know that one's efforts through the year are appreciated.

Just a few things before we all get involved in the the Christmas & New Year festivities...

Airport hours over Christmas and the New Year

Just a reminder that Biggin Hill Airport operational hours as as normal except for the following:

Closed Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th December

Tuesday January 1st open weekend hours only (9am to 8pm local)

Jock Maitland

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, Jock attended Buckingham Palace on November 30 to be presented with the award by the Queen after being named in her birthday honours list in June. Jock, who as most will know, is a former Squadron Leader with a distinguished combat record, was said to have taken the opportunity at the presentation to remind her majesty of a previous meeting. (In 1944, Princess Elizabeth visited Mildenhall airbase in Suffolk with her father King George VI. Jock, who joined the air force in 1942, was serving at the airbase at the time of the visit.)

The award recognises his work promoting flying among young people through the Biggin Hill Air Fair and numerous other air displays around the UK since the first show in 1963.

Air Displays International held a celebration dinner in Jock's honour on December 6th at Chartwell. The dinner was attended by family and friends from more than 40 years of air shows.

Changes to Biggin Hill Airport Social Club Membership

Due to a misunderstanding between Kim (of the Squash Club) and I, there is an important change to the membership arrangements of the new club from 1st January 2008.

Members of the Biggin Hill Airport Social Club will NOT be able to continue to use the facilities of the Squash Club. They will, however, be eligible for a discount of £5 from the appropriate annual membership fee if they wish to use the Squash Club after the end of this year. Kim has advised that, although we discussed the membership arrangements and thought we had agreed the course of action, having thought further about the conversation, and the agreed figures, she felt that automatic use of their club for our members (when our membership fee is substantially less than their own fees) would be unfair on her own membership.

The many members who have already joined Biggin Hill Airport Social Club have been offered their money back, although so far everyone (most of whom are not regular attendees at the Squash Club anyway) seem to feel

that their low fee is more than offset by the additional benefits provided for 2008 and have chosen to remain members in spite of this change. Kim stressed that our club members may, of course, attend the Squash Club on an occasional visit as a guest of any airport related member of the Squash Club who is present at the time, without the need to join, however this must obviously only apply to very occasional visits. (more than once or twice a month will be considered "regular" and would require membership of the Squash Club)

Kim and I apologise for any confusion, and hope that those members who wish to continue using the Squash Club regularly will feel that the discount offered will be helpful.

Up to date information can be found on the website at www.bigginhillclub.co.uk

That's it for now - I will be away for the next couple of months in Portugal and the USA, but I will try to send email Newsletters from there, and JB will keep me informed of any important items that you should be made aware of. I wish you all a really Happy Christmas and a Prosperous and Successful New Year.

John Willis
Biggin Hill Airport Users Database

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