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April-May 2009
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Guy Westgate tailslides the S1 Swift. A cloudless blue sky was the perfect backdrop for orange wingtip pyrotechnics during the sixth Al Ain airshow. See Guy's story on p24 (Paul Johnson, Flightline UK)

Sailplane & Gliding

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■ WE ARE sorry to report that Ralph Jones, a highly accomplished former member of the British Gliding Team, international competition medal winner and very well-known and talented glider repairer, died in hospital early on the morning of Sunday 8 March. He was only 73 but had been very unwell for some time.

■ TOM BRADBURY, who will be remembered for his hugely influential textbook for soaring pilots, *Meteorology and Flight*, and for his seminal *S&G* articles, died in late January at the age of 85. Tom was an internationally-renowned meteorologist, whose services to the sport were recognised by the award of the FAI Paul Tissandier Diploma, as well as a BGA diploma and life membership of his club, Bristol & Glos GC *(see obit p63)*.

■ A WORLDWIDE survey of glider pilots is being carried out by the International Gliding Commission (IGC) Country Development Working Group. The survey aims to better understand the issues faced by glider pilots, assess the quality of experience enjoyed by members of our sport and map out the nature of the global soaring community. Results will help the IGC to better define its development strategy, as well as being of interest to the gliding community as a whole. Key to the success of the study is as broad a participation as possible. The survey takes about 10-15 minutes to complete at *http://igc-survey.fai.org/*

■ ASSISTANT Instructor Courses are taking place at clubs around the country. For dates and locations, see *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/bgacourses.htm*. BGA coaching for locally-organised club soaring and cross-country courses can be arranged on an 'as available' basis. Please initially contact the National Coach, *mike@gliding.co.uk*. BGA Motor Glider Instructor Rating courses and CAA SLMG Flying Instructor courses can be organised for pilots wishing to gain those ratings. More details can be found at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/instructors/motorgliding.htm*

■ THE first round of BGA Chief Engineer/ARC Signatory training has now been arranged. This training assists BGA inspectors to upgrade to Chief Engineer status, becoming ARC signatories. Details are at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/news.htm*

■ A RANGE of scholarships is available from the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators (GAPAN). These include at least six PPL scholarships plus flying instructor and other bursaries. Full details at *www.gapan.org/careers/scholarships/schols09.htm* GAPAN is also seeking nominations for its annual aviation awards to mark achievement and excellence within the industry. Nominations are due in by the end of May. See *www.gapan.org/ awards/trophies.htm*

■ Entry lists for the 2009 nationals are now available at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/competitions/news.htm*. Regrettably, the 20m Two-Seater Championship has been cancelled due to lack of support. Entrants are reminded that they need a current FAI Sporting Licence to compete. It may not be too late to enter a Nationals Championship – online entries can be made at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgashop/applications/competitions/step1.php*.

Focus is now on a smooth transition

WELL, the final date for submission on 28 February is now passed and we would like to thank all of you who took the time to make your own responses to this very complex NPA, ***writes Chris Gibson.***

EASA had expected a deluge of responses. Up to the last few days prior to the close, we understand there to have been around 11,800 responses throughout Europe. This is undoubtedly a reflection of the complexity of compiling a coherent response to the wide-ranging NPA.

From feedback within the UK gliding movement, there seems to have been a good number of club as well as individual responses – your feedback over recent months has also helped us to 'hone' the BGA response, thank you.

On the important cloud flying issue there seems to have been a similar response throughout Europe – and especially from a number of national gliding organisations where they already benefit from the availability of a cloud flying qualification.

The FCL.008 sub-group, established to consider the wider issue of a continued IMC rating, has endorsed the requirement for a cloud flying rating for sailplanes. That is good news and we are hopeful that this proposal, in addition to other recommended changes in NPA 17b will safeguard our existing privileges to fly in, and up to, cloud.

However, we remain cautious and will continue to monitor and influence developments in relation to this topic over the coming months.

In other areas, including medical certification, licence issue, instructing, examining, revalidation, training, aerobatics, and towing, we have suggested substantive changes (along with other EU gliding respondents) which, should they be adopted, will limit the unnecessary burden of NPA17 on our sport.

Whilst EASA considers its position we will now need to focus, together with the CAA and DfT, on the method of national transition where our objective is to safeguard every pilot's existing privileges and minimise the disruption of licence preparation and issue.

'We are hopeful that this proposal, in addition to other recommended changes, will safeguard our existing privileges to fly in, and up to, cloud'

Our national position then needs to be agreed with EASA and implemented with the BGA being delegated the management of glider pilot licensing in the UK.

April 2012 suddenly seems quite close!

You would be forgiven for feeling that EASA are trying to fix something which is far from broken – however, we need to remain vigilant and proactive to ensure the fix does not restrict our freedom to grow our sport in the future years.

We will keep you informed throughout the summer as EASA prepares its Comment Response Document (CRD) prior to submission to the Commission in August 2009.

Nationals, regionals and other dates

BGA-rated and international competitions:

Overseas Championships	Ocana	18-29/5/09
World Air Games	Torino	7-13/6/09
Bidford Regionals	Bidford	20-28/6/09
Junior World Champ	Finland	21/6-5/7/09
European Champ (flapped)	Slovakia	27/6-11/7/09
Competition Enterprise (not rated)	Long Mynd	4-12/7/09
Shenington Regionals	Edgehill	4-12/7/09
Booker Regionals	Booker	11-19/9/09
Club Class Nationals	Pocklington	11-19/7/09
European Champ (unflapped)	Lithuania	25/7-8/8/09
Bicester Regionals	Bicester	18-26/7/09
Women's World Champ	Hungary	25/7-8/8/09
18-Metre Nationals	Hus Bos	25/7-2/8/09
Dunstable Regionals	Dunstable	25/7-2/8/09
Northern Regionals	Sutton Bank	1-9/8/09
Inter-Services	Keevil	1-9/8/09
Standard Class Nationals	Nympsfield	8-16/8/09
Tibenham Regionals	Tibenham	8-16/8/09
Open Class Nationals	Lasham	8-16/8/09
Lasham Regionals	Lasham	8-16/8/09
Midland Regionals	Hus Bos	8-16/8/09
15m-Metre Nationals	Aston Down	22-30/8/09
Junior Championships	Dunstable	22-30/8/09
Gransden Regionals	Gransden	22-30/8/09
2-Seater Comp (not rated)	Pocklington	23-30/8/09

2009 glider aerobatic contests:

Dan Smith Memorial (K21)	Dunstable	28-29/3/09
Glider Aerobatic Nationals	Saltby	11-14/6/09
Saltby Open	Saltby	11-13/9/09
Power vs Glider	Wickenby	2-4/10/09

Other notable dates:

World Aerobatic Championships (power), Silverstone, 20-30/8/09



GRAEME Cooper plans to celebrate his 40th birthday with a glider flight at London GC on 18 April. That may not sound unusual, until you think back to Graeme's last flight at London GC 10 years ago. "The trip then was a gift from my girlfriend (now wife) to celebrate my 30th birthday," says Graeme. "The day didn't quite go to plan as the glider I was in was struck by and destroyed by lightning. Luckily both the pilot and myself managed to parachute to safety, with me landing on the roof of a disused petrol station." Graeme is hoping to raise awareness and funds for the Parkinson's Disease Society (also celebrating its 40th later this year) through sponsorship of his return to the skies. His fundraising page is at *www.justgiving.com/big40reachfortheskiesagain* Graeme is pictured left with eldest daughter Emily, 5, at Devon & Somerset GC, where he was amazed to find that everyone knew his story. Find out how his return to the skies went in the next issue of *S&G*.

Waypoint list for 2009

THERE have been some important changes in the BGA Waypoint list since the 2008 version was published at the beginning of the last season, ***writes Ian Strachan, BGA WP List Co-ordinator***. It would be worthwhile updating your personal UK Waypoint database to the 2009 version.

The following BGA Waypoints were deleted by a special amendment list in September 2008 because they are in or under new controlled airspace near Doncaster/Sheffield Robin Hood airport: Blyth BYT, Doncaster DON, Retford RET, Tickhill TIC, Thorne TRN, Worksop E WKE, Worksop WSP.

This highlights the need to have advanced warning of airspace changes so that waypoints on the official BGA list are not in places that could embarrass the BGA.

Some BGA clubs have asked that their local points be moved. These include LAS (now further North at a road T junction, to be further from the airfield circuit) and CRA (now the College tower). There are new club start/finish points at Dunstable, Sutton Bank and Tibenham.

Conversely, the Windrushers club at Bicester asked for their three start points BI1-3 to be removed because they now use others, but a new point BC1 has been added for Bicester finishes. New points have also been added in the Newbury area, in Nottinghamshire, South Wales and Yorkshire.

All this has several morals for pilots. The BGA list exists to serve the BGA community. If you or your club think that a new point would be useful to your soaring, then ask for it.

The minimum that Tim and I (the workers) need is simply a clear description, and reasons for the new point. We can then do the plotting of grid and lat/long, and check that the point fulfils the criteria to go on the official BGA list.

Another point is that airspace changes do occur, some in mid-year. So be alert for changes to the BGA list. Important ones will also be publicised by the BGA, but there may be others, including additional points that have been found useful.

The definitive BGA list including the latest updates and any Stop Press items can be accessed through a link from the BGA website or directly at: *www.spsys.demon.co.uk/turningpoints.htm*

■ LASHAM is adding a new gliding course for 2009, specially designed for power pilots to try a new form of flying. The course, *PPL to Glider Solo in a weekend*, is designed to take anyone holding a PPL through the conversion and ultimately to fly a glider solo. Full use will be made of Lasham's training facilities, including the gliding simulator. Contact the Lasham office on 01256 384900 for further details.

■ THE CAA is publishing Emergency Airworthiness Directives (EADs) on its website from 31 March, replacing the traditional post and fax distribution of EADs. EADs will remain on the website *www.caa.co.uk/eads* for two months. The BGA will continue to provide a comprehensive information and alerting service for all gliders within the BGA airworthiness system.

■ A BGA Club Safety Review checklist has been published, replacing the previous Club Safety Review Aide Memoire, dated 24/10/2001. The corresponding RSO Safety Review document (RSO use only) has also been published. You can view the update at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/safety/newsletters.htm*

■ THE new Air Traffic Services Outside Controlled Airspace (ATSOCAS) came into effect on 12 March. This suite of services forms the UK Flight Information Services (FIS), which (excluding aerodrome services) are the only ATS provided in UK Class F/G airspace. CAP774 gives a full description of the services; this can be downloaded from the CAA website *www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP774.pdf*. The CAA has produced an interactive CD guide to the new services, which can be downloaded from the ASI website *www.airspacesafety.com* or you can request a copy of the CD from jonathan.nicholson@caa.co.uk.

■ A GUIDANCE leaflet (AMP2-11) for BGA inspectors and glider owners on how to carry out an airworthiness review and renew an ARC has been published by the BGA. Leaflet AMP2-1 has been updated to explain and detail permitted pilot/owner maintenance tasks. The two leaflets can be found at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/ampmanual/2-11.pdf* and *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/ampmanual/2-1.pdf* respectively. There is a new Part M section on the BGA website which provides links to these and other important information about the new maintenance and airworthiness process – see *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/part-m.htm*

■ THE Junior Championships take place on 22-30 August 2009 at Dunstable. If you are 25 or under at 31 December 2009, you are eligible to enter. Although you must have a silver badge and FAI sporting licence to fly in the competition, you do not need to have them at the time of entry, as long as you complete them before the competition (should you be offered a place). Entries should be in by 30 April and the entry list will be published about four weeks later. More at *http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/competitions/news.htm*

■ THE BGA fee for an EASA glider ARC, including 12 months airworthiness support by the BGA and access to BGA inspectors is £95. Applications submitted with an incorrect fee are returned unprocessed.

Logger traces add value to analysis

MANY readers will know of the UK Airprox Board, which analyses reports of close encounters between aircraft with the aim of improving safety. If you don't (and even if you do!), have a look at its website at *www.airproxboard.org.uk/*

Whilst reading the latest report I was struck by how useful glider logger traces can be in this analysis. The time stamps, latitude, and longitude on these traces are usually reliable and accurate as they are derived directly from the GPS. The pressure-derived height is also generally accurate to less than 100ft (subject to calibration of the logger). This information used in combination with radar recordings can often shed useful light on the circumstances leading up to the Airprox.

So I was rather surprised to read in the Jan-Jun 2008 analysis of an Airprox reported by a glider pilot where "a data logger trace was helpfully provided, however time was not shown". I don't know whether there were technical reasons for the lack of time on this particular trace.

There is a very simple action that we as glider pilots can take if we are involved in an Airprox, which can add value to our logger traces. Many GPS receivers and loggers have some facility to mark a particular position. Sometimes it is known as the "man overboard" feature. On a logger it may be known as a "pilot event marker".

If you are ever involved in an Airprox, then (after ensuring your safety) use whatever feature you have to mark your position. This will help confirm your memory of what happened. After landing make sure you preserve the information in your GPS or logger.

Thinking about how you would do this in advance will help you remember to do it if you should ever need to.

Phil King, Warwickshire

Hugh Woodsend replies: Many thanks for the helpful advice to glider pilots regarding logger traces. I can throw some light on the query regarding the time element.

Please send letters (marked "for publication") to the editor at editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk *or the address on p3, including your full contact details. The deadline for the next issue is* **10 April**

Until recently, it had been the practice of some pilots not to supply the log file (which the inspectors can read and interpolate accurately with the appropriate software). Instead they provided a printout of part of the data or a Google map or equivalent position printout. Neither is adequate for the investigation and the vital detail is lost.

With that in mind, I did add a footnote to my last article in S&G *(*Lessons to be learned, *December 2008-January 2009, p14) explaining log files would be required for the future.*

Some of our colleagues think they will in some way be worse off not supplying information but, in my experience, accurate information tends to help the gliding cause rather than the other way round. Great if you have the facility for 'man overboard/event' marker – please learn how to use it. Often we are trying to remember an incident some time after the event following complicated manouevering.

I am amused with Phil's comment on jogging your memory, as it has not been unknown to find gliders exactly in the opposite position to that they thought when writing the incident report!

Left to my own devices

DOUGLAS EVERY's device is clever (*Making light of towing*, February-March 2009, p29), but in the final few years to my retirement from gliding three years ago at age 67, I used a much simpler system – an inverted bucket and wide webbing strap.

The inverted bucket would be placed beside the tail, then using the strap I would lift the tail on to the bucket. Tail dolly was then fitted, and the strap again used to lift clear of bucket. Simple, cheap and no engineering involved.

Precautions required. Don't trap the webbing under the dolly. Use wide webbing to spread the load. Ensure that the bucket is strong enough. It doesn't of course have to be a bucket, but they are cheap and have a convenient handle to hang over the trailer tow bar when not in use.

I wouldn't recommend using the same bucket for the glider washing kit as, of course, there is the potential for dirt and grit.

Jack Harrison, Cambridge

NVGC plea for help

TO ENABLE Nene Valley GC to continue full operations, our search continues for a local Full Cat instructor.

Sadly our current 'septuagenarian' CFI Roger Morrisroe will be stepping down this May to take a well-earned rest and unfortunately we are struggling to find a suitable candidate within the club to replace him. Our best candidate is a Half Cat instructor and we hope to see him gain Full Cat status within 12-18 months.

In the interim we desperately need help from a local Full Cat instructor to help cover the CFI role at the club. If we don't manage to find help we will be forced to convert to a 'soaring only' club. This will mean we will no longer be able to carry out training or voucher flights and only members with a Silver C and above would be permitted to continue flying at NVGC (which counts me out along with many other). This will effectively force the club into closure as we simply couldn't survive long term without the training and trial flight income.

Our members have all worked so hard over the years to maintain our club, our fleet and our friendly atmosphere at NVGC and we welcome many visitors each year from GCs as far away as Australia.

As a club we have recently risen against the adversity of a planning application for a wind turbine in the centre of our runway – no joke!

To end up having to close our doors over this issue would be extremely sad for all concerned. If you feel you could help us in anyway at all then please, please, please contact myself kerry@mertz.tv or another NVGC committee member via the club's website, *www.nvgc.org.uk*

Kerry Mertz, Nene Valley GC





Vintage gliders brought a splash of colour to Parham at the 2008 Vintage Glider Club National Rally (Bruce Stephenson) and, below, Slingsby Falcon I (Mike Russell). Gransden Lodge is host to this year's rally

Vintage class at Gransden Lodge

EVERY year the Vintage Glider Club holds a National Rally, and for 2009 we are the host club – 23-31 May at Gransden Lodge, ***writes Anthony Edwards***. That means an influx of wonderful gliders from all round the country, and probably from abroad too. Most of them wooden, all of them colourful, some no doubt equipped with the latest in struts and skids, Cosim variometers, open cockpits and other delights unknown to the present generation.

Last year at the Southdown club 23 gliders attended, the oldest being a 1935 Scud III and a 1937 Rhoenbussard. Plenty of Slingsby wood, from Kites I and II and a Sky to Swallows and Skylarks, and of course a T-21b to keep Bluebell company as well as a Capstan. Elliotts of Newbury (did you know that was what EoN stood for?) were represented by two Olympia 2bs and a 463. And there were two Huetter H17as!



See what fun can be had with these older machines! Perhaps even cadge a lift in a two-seater, or talk one of the owners of a single-seater into letting you have a go! Come and learn how to park a proper glider on a windy day! Windy or not, there will be plenty of opportunities for willing hands to help with the gliders on the field.

Gentle tasks may be the order of the day, but without a hill nearby just staying airborne can be quite a challenge, with length of flight (hours, not miles) once again being scored.

Last year we hosted a VGC weekend during which I gave an evening talk on the history of the Cambridge University Gliding Club. We had only a few visitors then, but in May we can expect a good turn out, and I'll happily try again. And if it rain and rains I can always polish up my talk on the history of the best-speed-to-fly theory.

So put 23-31 May in your diary and look forward to a Gransden week with a difference.

For information about the VGC, including membership details, visit *www.vintagegliderclub.org*

■ During the Rally, Gransden Lodge airfield will be open to powered vintage aircraft visitors. Pilots of aircraft that arrive on Saturday 30 May will receive a free ticket to the Hangar Dance in the hangar that evening. Pilots must call CGC on 01767 677077 for a briefing.

Gliding skills put to good use when engines fail

US AIRWAYS Captain Chesley B "Sully" Sullenberger III was, no doubt, helped by his previous experience as a gliding instructor during the recent successful ditching of an Airbus 320 in the Hudson River.

On 15 January, US Airways Flight 1549 hit a flock of Canada Geese at around 3,000ft whilst climbing out of New York's LaGuardia airport, severely damaging both engines. "Sully" and First Officer Jeffrey Skiles quickly assessed that they had insufficient height for a safe glide to any of the surrounding airports. The safest option in such a densely populated area was to carry out a ditching in the Hudson River, which they flew with textbook precision.

What is most impressive is the way they managed, in the limited time available, to assess the problem, choose the best solution and then execute it. All 150 passengers and five crew were evacuated safely. The whole crew have already won numerous awards for the way they dealt with this nightmare scenario.

Gimli Glider

This was not, however, the first time a glider pilot has saved the day on board a commercial airliner when faced with total engine failure. The "Gimli Glider" in 1983 was an Air Canada 767, which ran out of fuel at 41,000ft on a flight from Montreal to Edmonton. This was due to a combination of factors including a technical defect with the fuel gauges, a recent change to metric units and some incorrect maths!

The Captain, an experienced glider pilot, flew the aircraft at best glide speed while the First Officer worked with the air traffic radar controller to assess glide performance and likely landing options.

No major airports were within range, but the First Officer's previous Air Force base at Gimli was close enough for the 767 to reach. Too close in fact, which meant the Captain had to sideslip to lose height – more gliding skills put to good use.

Unfortunately, there was a car race in progress on the airfield at the time! The aircraft suffered minor damage but was flown out two days later, remaining in service until 2008.

Perfect timing for inspiration



BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli reports back on a BGA Conference and AGM he says cannot fail to have left people feeling more than a little motivated about the coming season



Patrick Naegeli presented Marilyn Hood with a BGA Bronze medal. The citation reads: "During her tenure as Chairman of the BGA Communications and Marketing Committee, Marilyn has been instrumental in developing the BGA's communication to its membership. Under Marilyn's leadership, the BGA developed, implemented and then replaced with a significantly improved product a gliding simulator that is the envy of and an example to all gliding bodies and, it is suspected, the wider air sports community."

THE timing of the BGA Conference and AGM is just about perfect. Memories of the previous year's events – flying and non-flying – are still fresh in most people's minds; and, as temperatures start to climb and the days get longer, our thoughts begin to turn to the possibilities of the year ahead.

The conference provides an ideal opportunity for the BGA to acknowledge various individual contributions to the gliding movement. This time round, it was a great pleasure to be able to award several BGA Diplomas, along with one BGA Bronze Medal, to a number of people, each of whom has shown considerable and selfless dedication to our sport. It was equally inspiring to hear of the achievements of those pilots that received flying awards during the formal dinner.

Couple all of that with the interest stimulated by speakers such as Uli Schwenk, Richard Meredith Hardy, and our very own John Williams and Pete Harvey, and I defy anyone to leave without feeling more than a little motivated about the coming season.

Another aspect of the conference that is perfect is the organisation. There are too many people involved for me to mention here, but each and every one of them has, yet again, done us proud. I would like to thank them for all the work they do to make the event such a tremendous success.

Whilst principally designed for the gliding community, the conference caters for other groups as well. As in previous years, we had a number of guests attending. Several of our colleagues from the CAA came along in order to remain abreast of developments in gliding. They took the time to meet with their BGA counterparts during the course of the day, mix and mingle with other attendees (without feeling unduly threatened), and, where possible, joined us for the evening's festivities.

Each of the guests that I spoke to was extremely complimentary about the reception that they had received and the impressions they had taken from the day. All of which goes to increase the quality of the relationships that we have with the CAA – something that is especially important as we look to influence and accommodate the impact of new European regulations.

The AGM part of the day requires us to conduct a number of items of formal business. Pete Stratten, John Birch and Keith Mansell – our CEO, Treasurer and Secretary respectively – shoulder much of the work that this entails and performed their duties excellently.

One such item of formal business is the election of the BGA's Officers, specifically the members of the BGA Executive Committee. At this year's meeting, Ted Norman retired after five years of service. On the basis that one should never let a good person slip away, we have managed to persuade Ted to take a leading role in the new Operations Working Group where he now leads the BGA's work on flight operations. Chris Gibson and Pete Harvey also had to stand down as Executive members at the AGM. Both were eligible for re-election and took the opportunity to re-stand. Along with welcoming Chris and Pete back on to the Executive, we also welcome two new joiners – David Fidler and Robert John. I'd like to thank both the new and continuing members of the Executive for their commitment and service to the BGA. It is an important and responsible role and I am grateful for their support. *(Pictured opposite are the BGA Executive Committee members and BGA Officers who will be leading the BGA in the coming year.)*

April marks the start of the Executive's working year. In future issues, I will continue to report on our objectives, work and progress.

The weekend before the BGA Conference, Pete Stratten and I attended the annual Congress of the European Gliding Union (EGU) in Helsinki. I have mentioned the importance of the EGU to the BGA in previous articles. The meeting this time round coincided with the closing of the EASA consultation period on Flight Crew licensing. As we look to retain our flying privileges under EASA, the support of the EGU is especially important – it has the weight of nearly 90,000 glider pilots behind it, whereas we have just about one tenth of that number.

I came away from this year's EGU Congress, as I have done in the past, very impressed by the work of the EGU and the impact that it is having on our behalf. I was also pleased when Howard Torode, the Chair of the BGA Technical Subcommittee, was appointed to the EGU Board as the Technical Officer for Airworthiness.

Back closer to home, and at the time of writing, the first signs of spring are beginning to appear, albeit tentatively. I hope that, by the time you read this, the soaring season is well and truly under way.

Have fun, stay safe.



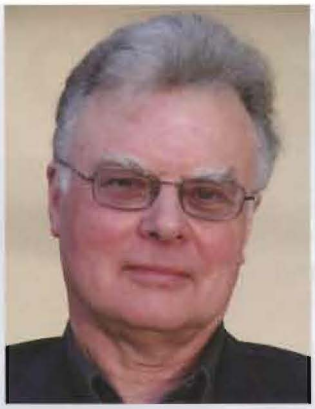
Patrick Naegeli
Chairman, British Gliding Association
March 2009



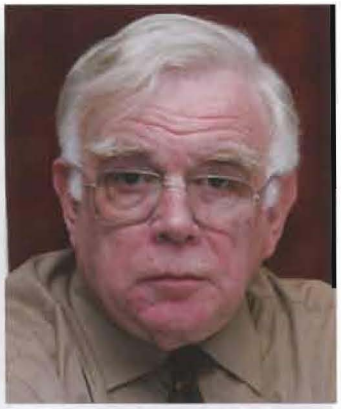
BGA Chairman **Patrick Naegeli** flies from Lasham. A Senior Regional Examiner, 2005 British Team member, tug pilot, BGA motorgliding examiner and CAA SLMG instructor, he has 3,000hrs and owns a Ventus 2.



Pete Stratten, the BGA's Chief Executive, has worked professionally in the sport since 1990. He began gliding at 14, flies a Ventus CT from Windrushers GC at Bicester and is an active instructor and inspector.



John Birch stood down from the Executive in 2008 after serving a full term of five years but remains as BGA Treasurer. He flies from Cambridge GC and is a full-rated instructor, who has a Duo Discus XT. He soloed in 1988 and has all three Diamonds.



Keith Mansell, President of Midland GC, stood down from the Executive in 2008 after serving a full term of five years; he is the BGA Company Secretary. A trustee of the Planning and Environment and the Philip Wills Funds, Keith holds a BGA Gold Medal.



Chris Gibson, who chairs the BGA's licensing working group, flies from Lasham and has MGIR and NPPL instructor ratings as well as being a full-rated gliding instructor. A tug pilot, he has two Diamonds, 1,500hrs and an ASW 20cl share.



Pete Harvey flies from Bicester and York and is a British Team member. After success in international hang-gliding, he won the European Open Class Gliding Championship in 2005 and again in 2007. He has a Nimbus 4 and a small share in a Robin 400.



Andy Perkins is the CFI at Booker and a Regional Examiner. He has three Diamonds, 2,500hrs gliding and is a tug pilot. He loves mountain flying and partying with glider pilots the world over. His mission: to make gliding fun, exciting and accessible.



Matt Cook, 29, has been gliding since 15, instructing since 17. A keen cross-country/competition pilot and member of the British Junior Team 2003. Now Thames Valley RE after five years as professional instructor and Booker CFI. Matt is an investment banker in the City.



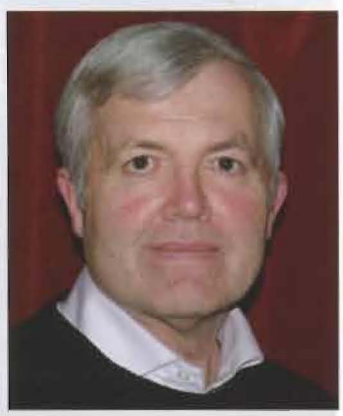
Phil Burton has been gliding since 2000 with the Norfolk GC. He heads up the Child Protection AwarenessTraining for the BGA and flies a Grob 103. After 25 years with the Air Training Corps, his knowledge and experience of youth matters is second to none.



Bruce "Tappo" Tapson, who flies from Buckminster, began gliding in 1957 with the Air Cadets, is a former RAFGSA CFI and former BGA and CAA examiner with more than 12,500hrs.



A late starter in gliding, **Robert John** went solo in 1994, since when he has flown 1,150 hours in 45 types and achieved an Ass Cat rating. He flies a Duo Discus out of Dunstable, where he has served as Vice Chairman and Chairman.



David Fidler is an RAF pilot with 39 years experience. He started gliding in 1996, holding a number of managerial positions in the RAF GSA before becoming Chairman for three years. A keen glider pilot, David particularly enjoys cross-country and high mountain flying.

It's smart to share ideas



BGA Development Officer Alison Randle highlights some of the key messages from the successful 2009 Chairmen's Conference and Treasurers' Forum held at Kenilworth



The babble of frank and eager discussion between delegates representing 45 clubs across the country made for a successful Chairmen's Conference and Treasurers' Forum (Paul Morrison)

THE Chairmen's Conference and Treasurers' Forum is the one time each year when the people who run gliding in this country can gather together to confer without distraction. It is a chance also for the members of the BGA team to both inform and be informed, in person.

I have observed that glider pilots tend to be intelligent and creative people who do not appreciate constraints – especially those of bureaucracy. Many club officials have spent time working in industries where buzzwords seem to be a primary output so, at this event, every effort is made to minimise that sort of nonsense, with the exception of one. On the basis that (apparently) every conference should have a decent mnemonic, and attending a conference is time wasted if you don't implement any of the ideas that fired you up on the day, three conferences ago we invented MIHIRLWYGH (pronounced merlwig) 'making it happen in real life when you get home'.

It is clear that at individual clubs there is a great deal of hard work and creativity going into running gliding. Yet time is a serious, potentially critical, issue: for some, there is barely enough time for flying so there is certainly no time for reinventing the wheel. Clearly, the smart thing to do is to share good ideas. This was our driving theme for planning the parts of the agenda that weren't dictated by the demands of external factors – some of which, although important, have huge potential for total turgidity, doom, gloom and general despondency.

Club treasurers spent several hours locked in a room together, their discussions grouped around pertinent issues. Back in the Chairmen's Conference, three clubs – Darlton, London and Dorset – took part in 'the club slot' to share ideas or use a common theme to promote discussion. Particular thanks to Geoff Homan, who travelled down especially.

Later, delegates split into smaller discussion groups to ponder specific topics that were deliberately chosen to help promote discussions and the sharing of experiences. We are grateful to Craig Lowrie (Site Purchase), Anne Miller (Environmental Opportunities), David Roberts (Opportunities for those with employees) and Pete Stratten (Making the most of the club fleet) for their assistance in facilitating discussions in addition to Roger Coote's case study centred on communication issues and my group, that discussed succession planning.

Celebrating achievements

The Development Committee felt it would be fitting to use the gathering to celebrate club achievements. Three clubs have achieved milestones worth celebrating – although Diana King pointed out that each had said that they were only part-way there and that fanfare should wait for at least another several years. Their pleas were ignored and representatives were given a bottle of something fizzy to take back to their clubs (see box on p12).

Two years ago, the BGA launched the Good Practice Scheme where clubs could put themselves in the running for a significant prize by sharing an innovative, effective idea that could be shown to have been adopted by at least one other club. Three clubs put themselves forward and, after much deliberation, the 2009 award, together with the prize of one free place on a BGA Assistant Instructor course and a bottle of fizz, was given to Highland GC for its weekly email scheme. Cambridge GC (traffic light safety review monitoring system) and Ulster GC (application that secured funding for a specially-adapted K-21) both received bottles to take back to their clubs.

Reading and responding to endless consultations, herding together a whole folder's worth of club policies and guidelines; asking difficult, uninspiring but significant questions... there are many aspects of the role of a BGA Development Officer that few pilots envy. But there is one aspect of the Development Officer's year that is sheer joy – listening to the babble of frank and eager discussion between delegates from clubs across the country.

Several club chairmen have said that each year they take at least one new idea from the conference and implement it. That to me makes it all worthwhile. For the Development Team, our MIHIRLWYGH is helping clubs to share good practice and good ideas. So please, help us to help you by continuing to share what you do best.

Full details on all the topics covered at this year's conference (including relevant slides) will be made available in the conference report on the BGA website.

■ It would not have been possible to run this event without a few key people: Debbie Carr and the BGA office staff, the presenters, Devin Giddings, conference assistant, and the staff at Woodside.

■ IN TOTAL, 101 delegates from 45 gliding clubs and the BGA attended:

- Bath Wilts & North Dorset
- Bidford Gliding Centre
- Black Mountains
- Booker
- Bowland Forest
- Bristol & Glos
- Buckminster
- Burn
- Cambridge
- RAF Chilterns – RAFGSA Centre
- Cotswold
- Darlton
- Deeside
- Derby & Lancs
- Dorset
- Dumfries & District
- East Sussex
- Edensoaring
- Essex & Suffolk
- Herefordshire
- Highland
- Kent
- Lasham
- London
- Mendip
- Midland
- Needwood Forest
- Nene Valley
- North Wales
- Oxford
- Peterborough & Spalding
- Rattlesden
- Scottish Gliding Centre
- Shenington
- Southdown
- Staffordshire
- Stratford on Avon
- Surrey Hills
- The Gliding Centre
- Trent Valley
- Upward Bound Trust
- Vale of the White Horse
- Windrushers
- Wyvern
- York Gliding Centre
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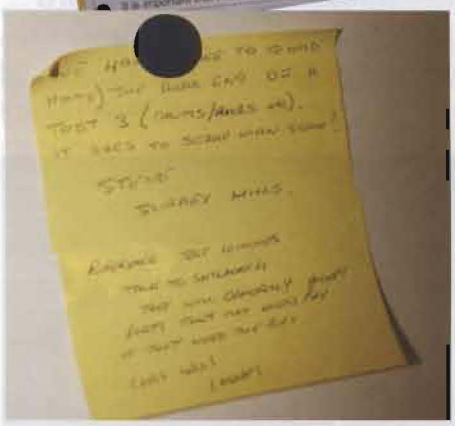
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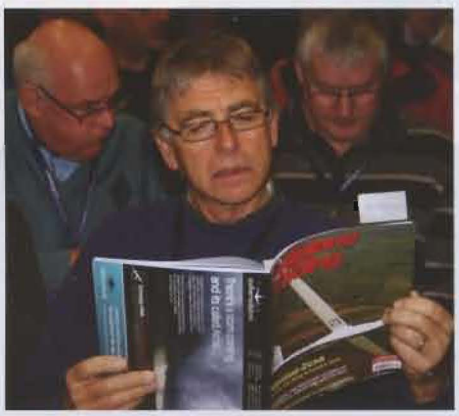
Three clubs celebrate achievements

- Dumfries & District GC – A significant increase (roughly 100 per cent) in club membership and building a new clubhouse from donated materials.
- Edensoaring – This new club has established itself on a new site and has recently secured planning permission for its operations for the next three years
- Southdown GC – This long-established club now has security of tenure, having raised a significant amount of money in a relatively short time to buy its site.









Clockwise from top left: Highland GC was one of three clubs rewarded for sharing best practice; BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli addresses delegates: making time for essential reading; the theme for much of the conference was sharing good ideas and resources *(Paul Morrison)*

A treasurer's perspective...

TO BE perfectly honest, I really wasn't looking forward to this year's conference, what with two seasons of bad weather and now a looming recession, I was expecting a day of wall-to-wall doom and gloom. However I was reckoning without the natural resilience of glider pilots and the overall attitude was very much along the lines of "we've been through this before and we'll get through it again". We just have to get on with it.

Perhaps the most directly relevant session was entitled "Is your club recession proof – how can you tell?" and I think probably the most important message I took home with me was that in these difficult times we face the same problems we have always faced, but even more so, and that we have to find ways to give members more value for money while keeping a tight control on costs. This will come down to concentrating on the basics, in other words, maximising launch rates and fleet usage.

The high spot of the day for me was during the discussion on software packages for club administration when volunteers were sought to look into the possibility of a standard, open source, package being jointly developed – the resulting tuneless whistling, eye contact avoidance and foot shuffling was a joy to behold! Fortunately, a number of brave individuals eventually came forward so, hopefully, we can look forward to a standard package being available before too long.

All in all, an enjoyable day with some thought-provoking content in an agreeable environment.

Ian Shepherd
Treasurer, Oxford GC

A chairman's perspective...

THIS WAS my third BGA Chairmen's conference and I was impressed by the organisation, participation and the venue, all of which seemed to be of high standard based on previous experience.

The conference was opened by Diana King, who reminded us of a conference mnemonic (MIHIRLWYGH) which equated to "making it happen in real life when you get home". Patrick Naegeli reinforced this during his subsequent talk and, between them, they got the day's proceedings under way.

Alison Randle gave a comprehensive news update on a number of topics that many in the audience were unaware of, which shows the value of the meeting from a communication perspective.

Credit crunch

The impact of the credit crunch was discussed at length and the need for clubs to be seen to offering value for money was clearly never more important as members question where to spent their cash.

Hugh Browning led a safety briefing, producing data that clearly showed that things wouldn't change unless we do things differently. Data from the recent BGA winch launching initiative was shown, highlighting the positive effect of change.

In this time when membership of the movement is contracting, Roger Clifton, an Equality Standard Adviser, helped educate us on the opportunity that exists by widening participation and opportunities in this area.

A lengthy and emotion-charged session covering the pending changes in the Child Protection area was led by Phil Burton and we left with no doubt that all clubs need to embrace the changes which begin to take hold later in 2009.

Achievements

A series of discussions followed which looked at club issues and achievements. These showed that solutions to most problems lie within the sport and that the recently introduced internet-based chairmen's forum could be effective in spreading the best-known methods for our sport.

Following the introduction of new ideas in the BGA Youth strategy by Andy Perkins, Patrick brought the conference to a close.

Most of us left feeling that the day had been a first-class exchange of information and ideas, which can be embraced and implemented in our respective clubs during this year.

Craig Lowrie
Chairman, Southdown GC

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Attendence high at AGM

There was a great turnout for this year's BGA Sporting Conference and AGM. Pete Stratten reports back on an informative and successful day

ON 7 March, some 400 glider pilots gathered under a bright spring sky for this year's BGA Sporting Conference and AGM. Held at the Hellidon Lakes Hotel, near Daventry, the event once again was superbly organised by Claire Emson and her team of volunteers.

Before the main Sporting Conference, the day kicked off at 9.15am with two parallel sessions for club officials; a Club Chairmen's forum and a CFI/Senior Instructors' forum (see box below).

Following a welcome to all and a brief introduction to the Sporting Conference programme by one of the organisers, Peter Harvey, a BGA Executive Committee and British Team member, the day's series of presentations started with Afandi Darlington, one of the UK's foremost aerodynamicists, providing a fascinating insight into sailplane design in the past, the present and what looks like an amazing future.

BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten took to the floor to present an overview of what the BGA is doing, where it's going and how we intend to get there, focusing on BGA Services, plans for 2009 and the opportunity to discuss what the future probably holds for glider pilots, instructors and inspectors.



BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten gave an overview of what the BGA is doing, where it's going and how it is going to get there

He emphasised the need for caution as there is a significant amount of work under way by BGA volunteers which, adopting the philosophy that nothing is certain in life, aims to ensure that regulators take a proportional approach and adopt the lightest possible touch to a sport that has a long and successful track record of managing itself without CAA involvement.

Moving on to a more uplifting subject, UK wave soaring guru John Williams and Peter Harvey worked together to give the audience some practical guidance in preparing for that next big flight. With a number of 500km flights and a 750km completed already in 2009 by some well-prepared UK pilots, John and Peter looked at weather trends, forecasting, task preparation and, importantly, how to extract the most fun out of a soaring day.

After lunch, BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli reflected on the past 12 months of BGA activity, noting the enormous amount of effort undertaken at clubs and centrally in delivering, developing and defending our sport. Focusing on the development of the BGA Operations Group and the BGA Performance Group, Patrick highlighted the work of the various associated sub-committees and working groups.

Patrick noted the increasing workload experienced by the Airspace sub-committee, a team led by Carr Withall and Bruce Cooper, that he identified as the envy of all UK air sports; the Communications and Marketing successes led by Marilyn Hood and her team over a number of years and the recent formation of the Flight Operations working group under Ted Norman. Patrick then described how *S&G* is moving forward under Susan Newby's editorship and thanked Susan on behalf of the membership.

BGA Treasurer John Birch reported on the association's annual accounts and future budget, noting a number of unplanned activities which had led to a higher than expected surplus. These included a purchased annuity, which removed a liability from the balance sheet, the sale of the Puchacz and airworthiness transition income where some related costs occur in 2009.

Pete Stratten then outlined some of the regulatory issues dealt with during 2008 and noted how the BGA organisation will continue to work closely with clubs and participants to ensure that their views and needs are fed back into this vital work.

Moving on to the formal business of the AGM, the Minutes of the AGM held on 8 March 2008 were approved; the Annual Report was adopted; the Revenue Account and Balance sheet for the year ending 30 September 2008 was adopted; the budget for the year ending 30 September 2010 and annual subscription rates (unchanged) were adopted and the auditors King Freeman were reappointed for a further 12 months. A change of wording to Operational Regulation 1.9 was proposed and accepted.

This was followed by the appointment of officials. Company Secretary Keith Mansell identified that Patrick Naegeli was re-standing as BGA Chairman and that Peter Harvey and Chris Gibson were re-standing as nominated Executive Committee members. Ted Norman was retiring as under the requirements of the BGA Articles of Association he was unable to re-stand. Robert John and David Fidler were nominated as new members and Keith Mansell noted that, as the number of nominees did not exceed the number of

CHAIRMEN'S FORUM

FOLLOWING the highly successful BGA Club Chairmen's conference in January *(see report on p10)*, this one-hour forum gave a number of club chairmen who had missed that event the opportunity to work through the key items that were discussed.

These included coping with recession and the BGA's development and regulatory response agenda.

BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli, supported by Chief Executive Pete Stratten, and Development Officer Alison Randle, led an engaging discussion which covered a variety of topical issues, including financial issues, instructor training, inspector availability, pooling resources and sharing good practice.

The 30 delegates all agreed that this event, closed before the main Sporting Conference got under way, had been very helpful.

For those chairmen who have yet to discover the BGA Club Chairmen's forum, please email Alison@gliding.co.uk

CFIs AND SENIOR INSTRUCTORS' FORUM

WITH a number of potential training developments in the pipeline, and a need to further expand on airspace safety issues, BGA National Coach Mike Fox led a series of discussions and briefings during an open forum for around 50 delegates, including BGA club chief flying instructors and other senior instructors.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of pilot education and the need to sustain raised awareness of airspace safety issues, including airspace structure, altimetry and NOTAM information.
Mike Fox noted that, with the support of club CFIs, the BGA would continue to develop and deliver associated guidance material.

David Cockburn of the CAA General Aviation Inspectorate was on hand to supply a number of CAA safety promotion and education documents, including the ATSOCAS briefing CDROM.

Any BGA club CFI who would like advice on any aspect of gliding training, coaching and airspace safety issues should email mike@gliding.co.uk

All photos by Alto



Richard Yerburgh of Bath, Wilts and N Dorset GC is presented with his BGA diploma by Patrick Naegeli. The citation reads: "It is members such as Richard who are the mainstay of the gliding movement"



Mary Meagher of Shenington GC also received a BGA diploma. "Mary has been extremely supportive of minority gliding groups through her charity and via Project Solo," says the citation

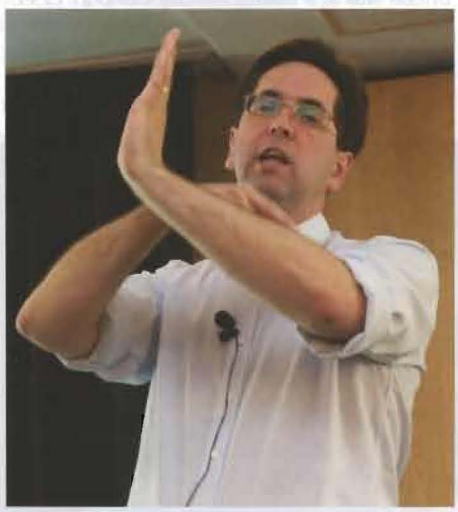
vacancies, there was no need for an election and all those nominated were accepted as members of the Executive Committee *(see p9 for a full list of Executive members)*. The formal business closed with the re-election of all the BGA Vice-Presidents.

BGA Diplomas were then presented for Services to gliding to the following: Mike Law of Deeside GC; Richard Yerburgh of the Bath, Wilts and N Dorset GC; Barry Pearson of the N Devon GC; Mary Meagher of Shenington GC; John Bridge, the BGA Ladder Steward; and to the BGA Mode S working group comprising of Peter Hearne, Dickie Feakes, Ian Strachan and Carr Withall.

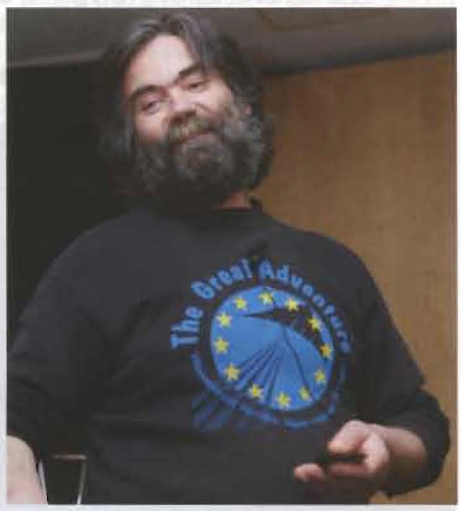
A BGA Bronze Medal for meritorious service to the BGA was presented to Marilyn Hood, who following a number of years of focused and successful effort, was handing over the Chair of the BGA Communications and Marketing Committee to Claire Emson. Patrick Naegeli went on to identify a number of honours recently awarded to glider pilots by the Royal Aero Club.

The afternoon session closed with a truly inspirational talk by Richard Meredith-Hardy, a trail-blazing microlight pilot, record holder and FAI Gold medalist. Richard described in fascinating and amusing detail some of his adventures flying over and among many of the world's most beautiful and challenging landscapes in support of a charitable organisation.

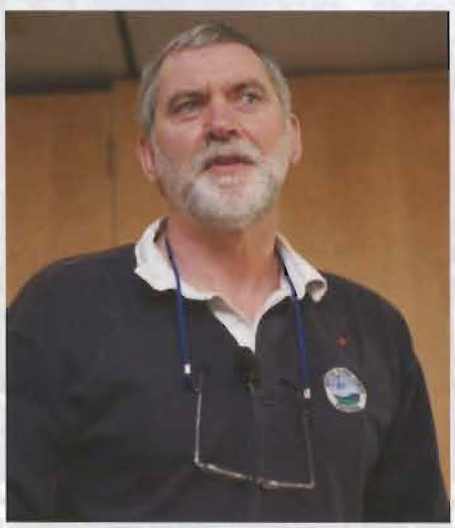
The conference, which was sponsored by Joint Aviation Services, continued with a formal dinner, the presentation of BGA trophies *(see p18)* and an after-dinner speech by Uli Schwenk, a German gliding International champion and coach who presented an insightful, evocative and amusing overview of the 2009 Gliding Grand Prix in Chile. The live music and fun continued into the early hours...



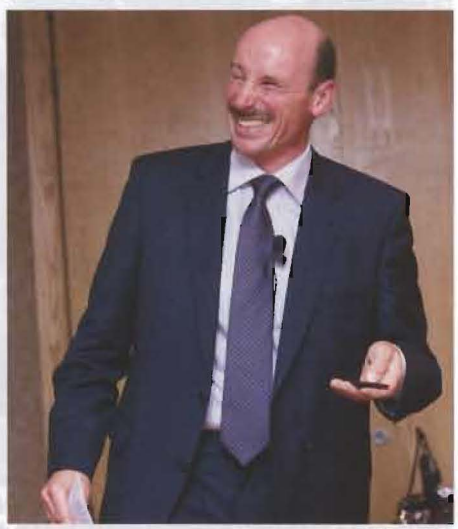
Aerodynamacist Afandi Darlington gave a fascinating insight into sailplane design



Microlight pilot Richard Meredith-Hardy talked about some of his adventures, including a flight over Everest



John Williams discussed recent weather trends and offered guidance for that next big flight



After dinner speaker German glider pilot Uli Schwenk shared his enthusiasm for gliding



Go South, old man!

OMARAMA in the spring is just lovely. By spring I mean the Merry Month of November, which of course corresponds to the Merry Month of May in the Northern Hemisphere, even if from a poet's point of view it does not alliterate or scan so well. The winter snow on the mountains is still thick and fresh, which by the way makes for brilliant air-to-ground photographs, and an exhilarating background for air-to-air shots. The main New Zealand holiday season, in December-January, has not yet started. Therefore November is probably the ideal time of year to go, though next year I hope to try the other quiet month, February. Which, for the mathematically-challenged, = August.

For the first time in three visits to Omarama I used a chalet on the airfield last November. Outside of the French and Swiss Alps, the word chalet tends to mean to me a tiny dwelling with minimal mod-cons and zero privacy in a long terrace of flimsy wooden cabins. This was because my only experience of chalets in Britain was at a Butlins holiday camp in 1955, where I was a kitchen porter on very low pay. After a few days I escaped thence to the bright lights of Birmingham with its (then) booming car factories, and became an electrician's mate for much more pay. My main job was to make tea and occasionally to grab either one of two wires when asked. If I didn't jump six feet in the air it meant that it was the other wire that had the 10,000 volts...

(Ahem – we were in New Zealand 2008, not in Skegness or Brummagem 54 years ago. Ed)

Sorry – as I was saying, the Omarama chalets are very different. They are pretty solid standalone buildings. I could sing in the shower (not a pretty sound) or play my cello (ditto) without any complaint from neighbours. It was also a few seconds' stroll to the nerve-centre of the airfield.

I rented an ASH 25 – a type in which, after buying the first ASH 25 to enter Britain in 1988, I have done some 1,500 hours and so feel totally at home. In the back seat was G Dale, currently fourth in the UK competition pilots' rankings. The weather was just right – never so bad that you were grounded, never so easy that you did not have to think hard every minute. Gliding heaven, indeed.



When I first showed this photograph to a gliding friend and asked him to find the other glider in the picture, he said, "You're only a couple of hundred feet above the ridge, and I can't see any other aircraft!" Then I pointed out the tiny glider in the bottom right corner. That is a Duo Discus from Omarama heading towards Mount Cook. I was at least 1,000ft above the crest. Camera: the very small and handy Canon Ixus 70 *(Platypus)*

'There may be pilots in New Zealand who follow MacCready settings but they won't be near the top of the rankings'

I had 13 cross-country flights in a fortnight. "What happened on that one dud day?" you ask. Oh, it was soarable, but I was so pooped I rested a day. Gavin Wills actually gave me a discount. On reflection he should have said, "Get your Pommy arse in that glider or you'll be charged for the day anyway, as per the contract!" (Or more polite words to that effect.) My Scottish ancestry would then have compelled me to aviate. I can't bear to waste money, food, beer or flying hours.

In three trips to Omarama I can't remember any non-soarable days. On the other hand I can't remember many piece-of-cake days either. No horizon-to-horizon cloudstreets as in Texas, with a standard technique for speed-flying, following your MacCready setting faithfully as per the cross-country textbooks. There may be pilots in New Zealand who follow MacCready settings but they won't be near the top of the rankings. You always had to concentrate, and be ready for a landout even when the sky looks great.

In the space of one hour you could sample

sea-breeze convergence, ridge, thermal and wave to oxygen-level. For me the most novel item on that menu was the first: sea-breeze convergence. I doubt if as much as one per cent of my cross-country flying time has been spent in sea-breeze – well, knowingly anyway. I am sure I must quite often have blundered into and out of such air in our small, soggy island of Great Britain and been saved or sunk by it without even being aware of what kind of airmass I was flying in.

Hardly any of us actively seek out an itinerary that makes as much use of convergence as possible, but G and I did just that along the east coast. It means being prepared to get close to the Pacific, and to be not very high. It goes against the grain – we want to be high and dry, not low and damp. That is why having big wings and an expert in the back seat is the ideal way to improve your education in this science of playing the convergences – and still have a chance of soaring home in time for the cocktail hour.

Generally if you see a mass of cloud beneath you on the seaward side of you, then this probably a convergence. But I make it sound too simple: the lift is continually shifting, and the clouds reforming. It's about as different from Texas as one can get. If I can get my old bones out to New Zealand again I shall focus on learning more about that phenomenon. It could even provide useful knowledge for working the elusive lift along England's south coast.

Has the world gone mad?

WHEN I was 11 years old I fell in love with flying models. I went to a model shop and bought some balsa; I bought razors to cut the balsa; and I bought cement to glue the bits of balsa together, with dope and thinners to make the tissue tight. All this stuff was acetone-based, of course; it smelt like acid-drop sweets.

Then I rushed out and flew the model – usually on a windy day over hard ground, rather than a flat calm over long grass, but then we learn by our mistakes. If the field was a Mecca for flying-modellers, like Sutton Park, near Birmingham, you would probably meet some kindly old fellow who had broken more tow-lines and burst more fuselages with over-wound rubber motors than I'd had hot dinners, and who would give you some advice and even show you his model-shed.

If that happened today, Britain's jails would be bursting: in shops I see blood-curdling notices warning that selling sharp blades to young people is a crime. Selling dope etc will similarly put the vendor in jail. And as for geezers offering to show you their model-building den, their feet wouldn't touch the ground. As for a kid trying to buy a big bottle of ether to make his engine really go – just don't think about it...

The world's best-known glider pilot...

AMIDST the gathering gloom of winter, recession and wars in all the old familiar places, we really needed a feel-good story to cheer us all up in January – and along it came. A pilot called Sullenberger became famous around the world. He will soon realise that fame is a poisoned chalice, and will wish for the rest of his life that he could just become quietly obscure again.

One thing he has achieved is real attention now being paid by passengers to those boring safety demonstrations and laminated cards showing where the exits are and how to open a door in a hurry. Such attention hitherto having been near to zero, I suppose it could only improve.

From our point of view as glider pilots it was also a great sales pitch for the sport of gliding. Even though this is an American story, this was distinctly gliding and not soaring. Sullenberger is good but not that good – in January, I mean, give us a break.

So gliding is what he did and I hope the gliderports everywhere now do a brisk business. Here is my idea as to how the owner of an airstrip might cash in on it:

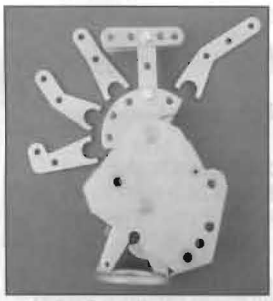
You construct a map of a chunk of New York that fits into your airfield – around an eighth-scale. It will include La Guardia and Teterboro airport. The big grey-blue swathe down the middle is of course the Hudson. If that can be made to line up with your runway it would be a help. You might even build bridges and skyscrapers, all of ultralight foam, for greater realism.

Visitors will pay to emulate the triumphant arrival of Capt Sullenberger. Engine failure is simulated at 400ft and they have three minutes to put the glider down in the "river" without hitting a bridge or a building en route. The glider is a side-by-side trainer with an instructor with around the same L/D as an Airbus. The punter can pay extra to:

- Wear a US Airways captain's uniform and cap. Have the instructor dressed as co-pilot in the US Airways captain's uniform
- Be photographed in the US Airways captain's uniform with co-pilot
- Make a cine-film/videotape of the entire flight as seen from the cockpit to show on the TV set at home.
- Have somebody on the ground make a cine-film/videotape of the entire flight as seen from the city
- Send and receive real radio messages – though I suppose "We're going to end up in the Hudson" is not allowed
- Receive an elaborate diploma after the flight detailing how well you did
- If you hit a bridge or a building you get a joke-diploma which you can show to your pals: "Congratulations! You demolished Grant's Tomb!"
- Receive a See-You CD showing the exact flight path flown and comparing it with Capt Sullenberger's
- Last, and best, you get a special diploma if you land safely at "La Guardia" or "Teterboro" and thus embarrass Capt S and US Airways...

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for modern gliders – Nose CW400 series £199, C of G CW300 Series £269, Exchange OM Series £117, CW Series £117, Spring kits available all series. "Ottfur" launch safety weak link carrier. £9.50.

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Trophy winners for 2008 collecting their awards from Phil Sturley at the BGA Dinner were: (back row left to right) Roy Wilson, David Masson, Dickie Feakes, John Williams, Roy Pentecost and Will Ellis. (Front row left to right) Kevin Hook, Janet Birch and Geoff Seaman (Alto)

Winning flights: 2008

BGA Performance Trophies

BGA 1,000km Trophy – not awarded in 2008
Fastest Flight over 1,000km

Wakefield Trophy – David Masson, Lasham/Surrey & Hants
Longest Handicapped Distance
711.5km @ 80.3kph

Furlong Trophy – Douglas Gardner, Cotswold GC
Longest Handicapped Triangle
510.9km @ 75.1kph

Frank Foster Trophy – John Williams, Scottish Gliding Union
Fastest Handicapped 500km
139.5kph

California In England – Janet Birch, Cambridge GC
Longest Handicapped Flight by a Female Pilot
355.5km @ 84.0kph

Manio Cup – Kevin Hook, Scottish Gliding Union
Fastest handicapped 300 km
159kph

Seager Trophy – Andy Aveling & Geoff Seaman, Lasham/Surrey & Hants
Longest Handicapped Distance in a two-seater
566km @ 77.3kph

Volk Trophy – Phil Jeffery, Cambridge GC
Longest Handicapped Out & Return
463.1km @ 80.9kph

De Havilland Trophy – Kevin Hook, Scottish Gliding Union
Greatest Gain of Height
18,803ft height gain.

BGA National Ladder Trophies

www.bgaladder.co.uk

Enigma Trophy – Roy Wilson, Deeside GC
Winner, Open National Ladder
2,2114pts

Firth Vickers Trophy – John Williams, Scottish Gliding Union
2nd Place, Open National Ladder
2,1840pts

Slingsby Trophy – Roy Pentecost, Lasham/Surrey & Hants
2nd Place, Weekend National Ladder
15,190pts

L.duGarde Peach Trophy – George Metcalfe, Lasham/Surrey & Hants
Winner, Weekend national Ladder
1,5317pts

Spitfire Trophy – Andy May, London GC
Winner, Junior National Ladder
12,317pts

Chris Wills Trophy – Phil Lazenby, Yorkshire GC
Winner, Wooden Ladder
10,849pts

Other BGA Awards

Rex Pilcher Trophy – Mark Gatehouse, Dunkeswell GC
Earliest Diamond Distance in the Year 2008
19 May 2008, 509kms

Goldsborough – Leigh Wells, Bristol & Gloucester GC
Highest placed pilot(s) in previous World Championships, 4th 15m WGC 2008

Phil Lever – Will Ellis, Essex & Suffolk GC
Most Promising Junior Pilot

John Hands – Dickie Feakes
For outstanding support for the organising and running of competitions

Trophies presented by Phil Sturly at the BGA Dinner



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DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

The BGA is seeking volunteers to join the team of expert advisors attached to the Development Committee, which provides support and advice to clubs, assisting them with their successful management and development.

In order to support the existing team of professionals and volunteers, there is a need for specialist experience and expertise in the following areas: Club strategy development; Environmental management; Volunteer management; Financial management and funding; IT Management; HR. Individuals recruited to these positions will be asked to develop advisory packs for clubs, to advise individual clubs as needed and to attend occasional Committee meetings.

If you think you could contribute to any of these voluntary positions, please initially contact the Chairman of the Development Committee, Diana King, via the BGA Office, specifying which area interests you and asking for a description of the role.

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Snapshot of the BGA Sporting Conference

This page from top:
This year the Caroline Trust Cadet of the Year Award went to four young pilots, all from Rattlesden GC. Pictured from left to right, they are: Sam Woodgate, Alex Szymanski, Roger Cottee and Aiden Hughes. Rattlesden CFI Sarah Lee said: "The four have formed a small group who get things going, instil teamwork and enthusiasm in the rest of the club and, through their endeavours, make the club a better place for everyone." (Alto)

Marilyn Hood (right) and Sandy Hawkyard did a wonderful job manning the S&G stand. Thanks again ladies! (Alto)

Opposite page, clockwise from top left:
The exhibition hall offered a hands-on opportunity, with some of the latest gadgets on display (Alto)

Room service! Who ordered the trophy then? (Alison Randle)

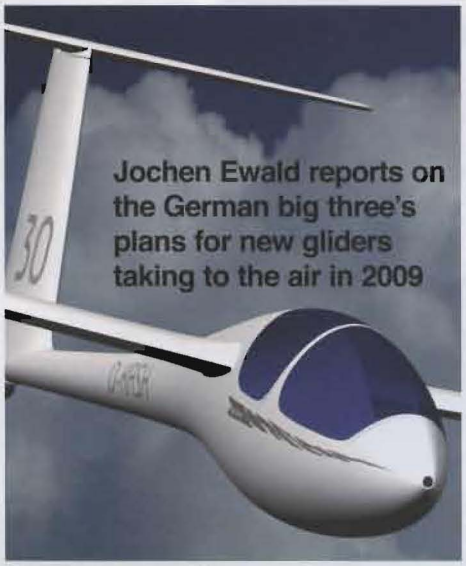
Delegates received a free T-shirt at registration, provided by sponsors Joint Aviation Services (Alto)

The BGA simulator was a great hit, but getting it in and out of the conference venue proved a challenge (Alto)

Pete Masson and Howard Jones of It's a Wing Thing, seen at their stand in the exhibition hall (Alto)



Three to watch out for...



IT'S always a bit difficult to tell the reader what will come next on the gliding scene. Some manufacturers need years to realise an announced project, others do not present their secretly developed newcomer until after the maiden flight. But for 2009, the 'big three' in the German glider manufacturer scene all published something about the new gliders they are working on – and it appears quite realistic that these new developments will also take to the air during this year.

So, what's new?

DG-1000

DG is going to complete its two-seater range again by introducing a self-launcher with retractable engine. After the (flapped 18/20m) DG-505MB production in Slovenia (and the co-operation with AMS) ended, there was no self-launcher in the well-loved 20m class available on the market. DG was not happy with the experiences it had with the 64hp Solo two-stroke engine they installed in the 505MB. And they found nothing else on the market appearing suitable, small and lightweight enough to self-launch their actual (unflapped) 20m two-seater, the DG-1000.

The long search for a replacement ended recently, when Solo announced a new version of their engine, promising to solve DG's problems. This new engine will, according to Solo, deliver 70hp, has a new crankshaft to reduce vibrations and is equipped with a computer-controlled electronic fuel injection system. The engine, combined with an optimised propeller drive system, will be installed in the DG-1000M, which can be ordered with all the options already known from the DG-1000S/T series.

The engine will be controlled by DG's well-known and reliable DEI-NT unit, which is installed in both seats and allows full use of the motorglider for training and passenger flying with P1 in either the front or rear seat.

Another feature of the new DG-1000s is an electrically-retractable main wheel to take workload off the pilot. DG is going to present the prototype this spring at the Friedrichshafen Aero 2009, and the first deliveries are planned for late 2009/early 2010.

Schempp-Hirth Arcus

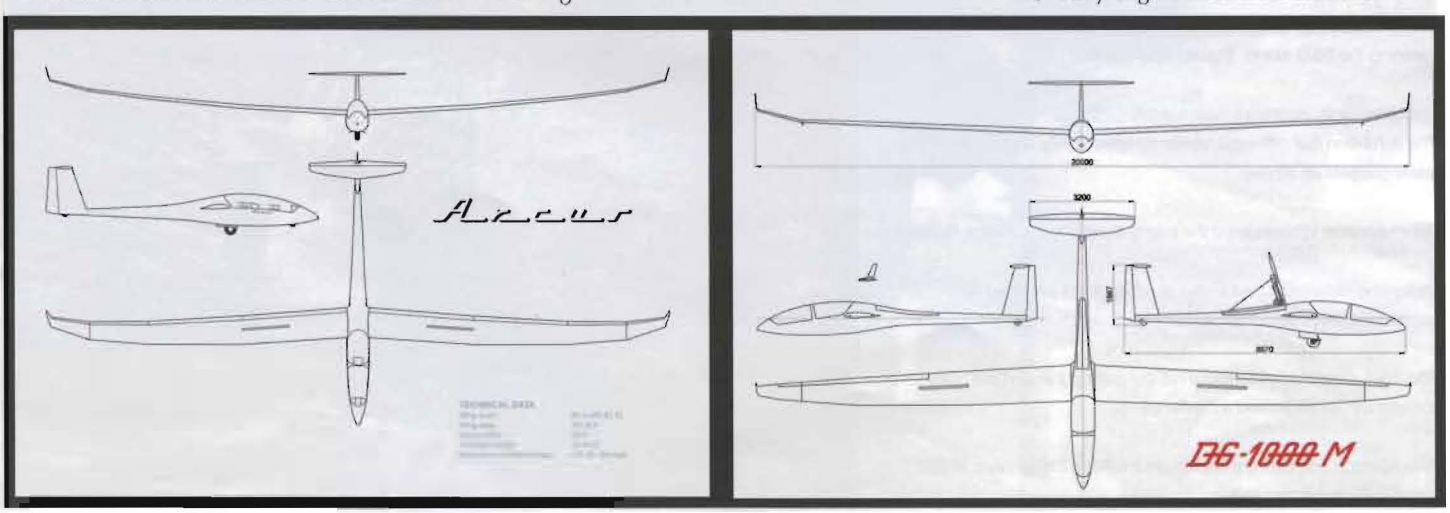
Schempp-Hirth, which recently presented the enlarged 'L'-cockpit for its Duo Discus XL(t) and Nimbus 4DLM two-seaters surprised us with a completely newly-developed flapped 20m wing for a 20m glider called Arcus. The name is fitting if you have a look at the elegantly swept and bent new wing shape, which promises not only a performance clearly above what you can buy actually in the 20m two-seater class, but also handling qualities – even when fully ballasted – like you are used to from flying single-seaters. To achieve this, the wing is equipped with full-span flaperons following the unique wing contour. With the XL cockpit and the well-suspended lightweight and reliable braking Behringer main wheel unit it will fulfil all your wishes concerning safety, comfort and ergonomics.

This two-seater will be available as a pure glider, as Arcus T equipped with the Oehler system Solo 2350 sustainer drive and as Arcus M with the Binder Solo 2625-2 engine unit (both are certified units and already 'in store' (used on the DuoDiscus XLT and the Nimbus 4DLM). For those who want something 'really innovative', Schempp-Hirth will also offer the Antares 20E's electric self-launcher system for the Arcus E. This is done in co-operation with Lange Aviation (which will install and maintain this drive at its factory at Zweibrücken).

Schleicher ASH 30Mi

After more than 20 production years and 260 built, the Open Class two-seater ASH 25 will now be replaced by a successor, called the ASH 30Mi. This is a completely new development without compromises. The recent developments of other manufacturers have clearly shown that simply enlarging the span of an Open Class glider does not improve its success in competition. Schleicher found the (actual, regarding available materials and aerodynamics) optimum in a span of 26.5m, combined with the latest airfoil geometry and a wing shape optimised for nearly elliptic lift distribution. By doing so, it combines best performance with best handling qualities. The ASG 29 wing was already designed to serve as the outer wing section of the new two-seaters' four-part wing with a span of 26.5m, 17.1 sqm surface, a thickness of only 13 per cent, blowing turbolators in the flaps and ailerons and automatic control connections.

The completely new fuselage offers more space in the cockpit to accommodate tall pilots (>2m), and a new canopy shape with a view like the ASH 26 offers and room for the rear pilot's legs like you would find in the K-21. The engine box in the fuselage to take the 41kW Diamond Engines (former Mid-West) rotary engine with electronic fuel ➢



> injection and Schleicher Propeller is standard equipment, as most customers will order this glider as the 'Mi' self-launcher.

The ASH 30Mi is expected to fly mid-to-late 2009.

Schleicher ASH 31Mi

With the ASH 31Mi, Schleicher presents a successor for its successful self-launching FAI-18-m-class motor glider ASH 26E, whose fuselage (with several sensible improvements) will be used. Also here, the ASG 29 wing with 13 per cent thickness is used, with each wing enlarged by 1.5m at its centre. With a separation point at 7m, this 4/6 part wing fits into a 'standard' trailer and can be flown with either 18m span to compete in the FAI 18m class or with 21m span as a 'small' Open Class glider with a performance not far below the big ships, but with the handling and rigging qualities of an 18m glider. A fixed tailwheel (most liked by the competition pilots) will be standard, and an optional steerable tailwheel (for independent travellers) will be offered.

Like the ASH 30, the 31 will be equipped with the engine box when ordered as a 'pure glider', and in the Mi the same 41hp Diamond Engines rotary drive unit featured in all Schleicher self-launchers will be installed.

This (motor-) glider is really a new venture in the gliding scene – the first FAI-18m glider with the additional possibility to experience 'open class performance' in a glider that can easily be handled on the ground and in the air, and stored in a short standard trailer.

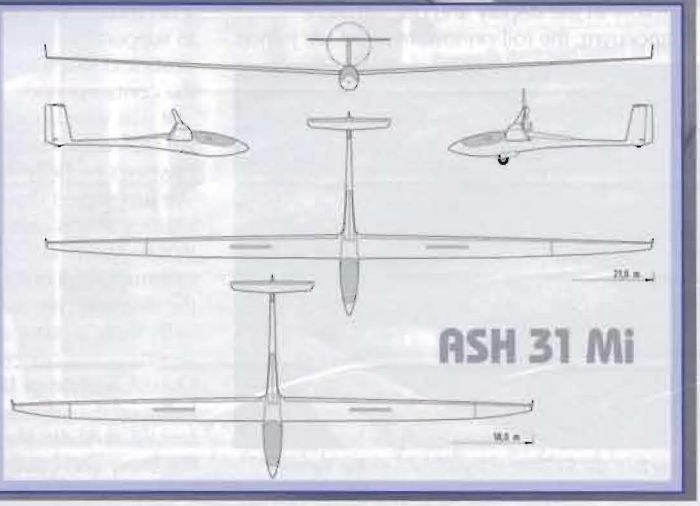
Due to the fact that nearly all the components (ie moulds, etc) of the ASH 31Mi already exist, it is expected to have taken to the air already during the first half of 2009, and the complete technical data has already been published (see panel below).

So, this year's Aero Exhibition is worth visiting – I guess that most of the gliders presented here will be visible there (at least partial and not yet flown), and the manufacturers surely will be able to tell you more details about them than they actually publish.



TECHNICAL DATA ASH 31MI

Span	21m	68.9ft	18m	59ft
Wing area	13.2sqm	142 sqft	11.9sqm	128sqft
Aspect ratio	33.5		27.3	
Fuselage length	7.07m	23.2ft		
Cockpit width	0.66m	2.17ft		
Empty weight	430kg	948lb	420kg	926lb
Max. weight	700kg	1543lb	630kg	1389lb
Max. wing loading	53kg/sqm	10.8lb/sqft	53kg/sqm	10.8lb/sqft
Max. waterballast	160l	353lbs	120l	253lbs
Max. payload in seat	115kg	253lbs	115kg	253lbs
Engine type	IAE 50R-AA rotary			
Max. power	56hp	41kW		
Fuel (fuselage)	16l			
Fuel (two wing tanks, optional)	46l			
Max. climb rate	4m/s			
Propeller	Schleicher AS 2-blade, 1.55m/5.08ft diameter			





Al Ain is a desert delight

Guy Westgate in the Swift high above Al Ain's desert *(Peter Wells)*



Aerobatic champion Guy Westgate reports on the CRH Swift Team's recent expedition to the sixth Al Ain Aerobatic Airshow in the Arabian Desert, to perform the first glider display in the region (and to set a record)

AL AIN, the 'Garden City' of the United Arab Emirates, is an unremarkable town centred on the Al-Buraymi Oasis, in the otherwise arid Arabian desert. The settlement is known to be at least 3,000 years old and home to the world's oldest irrigation channel, but more recently Al Ain has become famous for hosting one of the best airshows in the world.

This year saw performances from the USA, Italy, UK, Hungary, Sweden, Russia and Saudi Arabia shipped to the Gulf. The Swift Team were honoured to be invited to perform the first glider display in the region among legendary performers such as Brit Will Curtis in his brutal 525hp Sukhoi Su26 and the Scandinavian Airshow team with their Pitts Python and Ag Cat biplane, complete with two Lycra-clad girls on the wing.

In our quest to expose increasing numbers of the public to gliding, we have continually evolved our flight profile to include the aerotow in the display and our signature manoeuvre, the roll-on-tow. In 2008 we joined forces with the RAFGSA Team from RAF Halton, who kindly let us rent their Piper Pawnee. Zulu Glasstek's Peter Wells adds the finishing sparkle to the team line-up with his shapely Silence Twister aircraft.



Guy flies the S1 Swift in formation with the Twister *(Guy Westgate)*

Getting the equipment to the Gulf was the team's first challenge as we were limited to a single 40ft container. After some head scratching over graph paper, we calculated that it was possible to fit all three aircraft into the one 'high cube' container, but it was going to be tight. The two-week pack in December was a nervous time, with multiple wooden frames to support the wings in the roof, and metal struts and straps to fix the heavy fuselages to the container floor.

It was with both relief and trepidation that we sealed the container's doors on the Pawnee's propeller with just an inch to spare. We just prayed the contents would last the journey. It was also a dream moment to realise that someone actually believed in us enough to transport all our equipment 3,400 miles into the desert for just four short display flights!

By early January a message came through reporting that our container had reached Dubai's seaport of Jabel Ali, but we only truly believed the adventure was real when we arrived at Al Ain five days before the start of the show and cut the door seal to find our toys had survived.

The enormous Al Ain airfield is roughly split in half, housing a military training base and a civilian airport. We were allocated space in an empty military hangar, along with the other teams, to assemble the Pawnee and to protect the aircraft overnight.

Our UK team could not have been better picked for their skills and enthusiasm. Ian Gallacher and Paul Moslin assembled the GSA's Pawnee in record time, Mike Newman had a constant source of energy to polish things and whenever there was a quiet moment, Pete Wells provided the entertainment trying to copy the Swedish wing-walkers moves including their 'cat walk'.

Later in the week Paul Johnson, our team photographer, joined us to cover the event for his online airshow magazine, *Flightline UK*.

There were some local issues to resolve before we could fly; the GCAA Civil permissions to aerotow gliders and perform low-level aerobatics in the Emirates had not been approved and we had planned to fix cameras on the aircraft for our practice flights over the sand dunes, but cameras were initially not allowed in military areas of the airfield.

Gliders require special handling, but we had a job convincing the military hangar boss that we could not taxi without help. The air traffic controllers were more imaginative and we found that by offering solutions not problems, ➢










Daredevils leave spectators in awe as air show gets off to a flying start

Main pic: Guy in the Swift on his last low-level pass down the crowd line; inset top: the Scandinavian team's Ag Cat was used for skywriting to advertise the start of each display: above, left to right, Peter Wells interviewed for the airshow DVD; Peter rolling the Twister along the Al Ain crowdline; Royal Saudi Air Force's aerobatic team, the Saudi Hawks; the airshow's media centre was full of the latest press stories (and cold drinks)

(Photos by Guy Westgate and Paul Johnson, Flightline UK)

Mirror formation fun before the start of the show (Peter Wells) and, below, tug pilot's view – S1 Swift formating on the Pawnee (Ian Gallacher)

➢ we got along famously. The start of the runway was over a mile to the south of the assembly hangar, and the display line was the same distance to the north, but we negotiated use of the nearest taxiway, both wider and longer than most UK runways.

Our Arab hosts were endearingly perplexed by the glider – convinced that only magic could make it fly! After the flying permissions came through, the first flight was indeed magical, what an incredible landscape! If the Eskimos have 20 words to describe snow, then surely the Arabs have 20 to describe sand! The rich red and yellow desert colours contrasting against the deep blue sky and the dunes just melted into the hazy inversion on the horizon.

Peter set off low-level to hunt for camels, whilst the glider pilots on the team sampled the hot desert air from higher altitudes.

The dune patterns were subtly different in each direction we explored and it was only a mile or so beyond the airfield boundary that the last touch of humanity gave way to endless golden rolling dunes, with not a tree or hedgerow in sight.

Having recovered from the assault on our senses, we set about the serious task of working the display up to standard – the team's last show in September suddenly seeming a long time ago.

Much of our display is below 300ft and we noticed that the unfamiliar scenery offered no visual clues of scale or height. The 4,000m long runway was surrounded by featureless dunes and the desert floor looked quite different to the lush grassy fields of home.

As a formation team, we are each separately and collectively responsible for our performance. Paul Moslin's expert handling of the Pawnee is essential and carries huge responsibility for the low-level aerotow. Equally the risks of a tug upset are ever on my mind flying inverted aerotows at 200ft and Peter needs us both to fly accurately for his tight formation aerobatics.

As the practice days progressed, the controllers seemed a little more relaxed with the melee of gliders, aerobatic aircraft and Jumbo jets all sharing the same airport even allowing several display acts in the sky at once to practice – apart from the Russians,



that is. They had a fabulous collection of four vintage Polikarpov World War Two Warbirds but only one had a radio. The first suffered a ground loop on landing that broke a wing and the next one lost a propeller in flight. Once repaired, this did afford them the privilege of sterile airspace for their evening aviation escapades, as the controllers freely admitted they had no idea what was going to happen next.

After four short days the airshow started and we duly planned our days around our short 12-minute display flying slot.

The Emirati crowd have got used to new world records claims at their show – the maddest so far was Hungarian Zoltan Veres, who completed 408 consecutive rolls in his Extra300 last year.

We wanted to capitalise on our inverted and rolling aerotow so we promised a world record of our own – rolling the glider for the maximum number of continuous rotations down the crowd line.

It is very easy to get disoriented, and the inner ear starts to play tricks after four or five rolls. The technique is to barrel the roll enough to keep the rope tight, but not enough to loose position behind the tug. Before Al Ain, nobody had achieved more than 11 consecutive rolls.

We worked hard to achieve 10 rolls on the first day in rough conditions before setting a new record of 12 rolls on both of the next two days. Conditions were perfect on the last day with no turbulence and we broke our record again with 14 consecutive rolls! That's over

one minute of constant rolling.

The Arabic press loved the story and we had our moment of glory making the headlines in the *Gulf News*, *The National* and *Khaleej Times* newspapers.

The low-level aerotowing manoeuvres complete, the Twister got a great reception as it took centre stage with Peter's graceful loops, rolls and climbing flick rolls while the Pawnee and Swift climb to release height. From 3,000ft the glider can eek-out three minutes of manoeuvres. The cloudless blue sky was the perfect backdrop for our orange wingtip pyrotechnics and the glider display was flown to optimise the smoke trail, flinging the smoke lines into contorted spirals.

Al Ain features staged seating, so we added a limbo pass as a thrilling finish as the crowd could look down on the glider flying under the limbo bunting. Exciting stuff for the pilot and those holding the limbo poles!

'Our Arab hosts were endearingly perplexed by the glider – convinced that only magic could make it fly!'

We were the only team permitted to park in front of the crowd and our CRH Plant sponsor's logos were used as a backdrop for most of the TV news reports of the week.

Following an early display slot on the last day, we had the Swift and Twister back in the container before the show closed. The Pawnee was stripped and secured by lunchtime the next day, just in time for some terrestrial sightseeing before the winter chaos of our journey home, with a heavy snowfall that caused the worst travel turmoil to Heathrow and the M25 for 18 years.

All in all it was an amazing privilege to showcase gliding and our display in front of a new audience in a country that has never seen glider aerobatics before. We are hoping we have impressed enough to be invited back for 7th Al Ain airshow in 2010.

www.swiftteam.airshows.org.uk/

■ Guy Westgate is eight times UK glider aerobatic champion and flies a Ventus 2CM and S1 Swift from Southdown Gliding Club at Parham. He has flown aerobatic glider displays in UK since 1998.













Clockwise from top, The corkscrew pass, Twister barrel rolling around the Swift on inverted aerotow (top photo by Guy Westgate, next photo by Paul Moslin)

Pull-up after the first limbo pass for a chandelle (Guy Westgate)

The 40ft sea container being loaded for Dubai and the journey home (Guy Westgate)

Camel hunting, Peter Wells low over the Al Ain desert in his Twister (Guy Westgate)

Guy passes under the limbo bunting on his first pass (Paul Johnson)

Roll on tow, glider in knife edge during display practice (Guy Westgate)











Seasonal splendour

THANKS as ever to these photographers, this page, top:

Nimbus 3DT A26, flown by Burn's CFI Dave Peters and John Firth, landing at sunset (Alastair Mackenzie)

PIK20E on a snowy runway at Aston Down. The tyre tracks on the runway (courtesy of some annoying joyriders!) were sadly the only wave found that day (Eugene Lambert)

Opposite page, clockwise from top left:
Lincs GC K13 awaits the start (Dick Skerry)

Burn's Janus, flown by Tony Flannery and Kevin Moseley, contacted wave over the airfield on 21 February (Kevin Moseley)

Duo, with a fellow York club member in it, taken during a week at Sisteron last June (Mark Lench)

Also taken on 21 February, following Andy Wilson's 'magical' flight in the YGC T21, reaching 6,250ft in wave (Andy Wilson)

If you would like your photographs to be considered for publication in Gliding Gallery *or included elsewhere in* S&G, *do please send them to* editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk



The other Australia
– part two, colours in the clouds



Lance Cole continues his tale of derring-do and derring-don't Down Under, in his quest to explore an alternative Australian aerial adventure as the gliding equivalent of a surf bum

Essential basics for flying in Australia

- Vital to secure temporary membership of the Gliding Federation of Australia prior to first flight: three months membership at $70AUS.
- It is vital to retain the paperwork and your GFA number to use as proof of GFA membership if visiting subsequent clubs.
- Take your log book and medical certificate.
- Take out extended private travel health insurance policy to cover gliding-related injury, treatment and repatriation. Do not rely on reciprocal arrangements and be aware that a standard travel insurance policy will not cover gliding.
- Ensure you have a proper glider pilot's cap or hat. A neck protection flap is advisable.
- Quality sunglassess – notably amber vision – are a must.
- It's very important to take a Camelback or ensure adequate hydration.
- It is essential to wear long sleeves and to use back of the hand clip-over gloves and high SPF factor sun cream. If you do not, skin cancer at worst and immediate wrinkles at the least, are a risk.



Dust flies during dirt runway aerotow take-off at Narrogin Gliding Club. Forget to shut the air vents and the sliding canopy panels and you'll end up red-faced! (Facing page) Careering through cloudland as the lift builds up *(Lance Cole)*

MY JOURNEY around the smaller, less-well-known gliding clubs of Australia was proving to be huge fun. The members of Bendigo Gliding Club, and those of the Vintage Glider Club of Australia, had been incredibly kind, tolerant of my desire to just be amongst them and their gliders and to take photos for my next book. And I did not bend the PW-6 either!

Then I headed to WA – Western Australia and Narrogin Gliding Club – 200 miles south east of Perth where the skies go on for ever and the colours in the clouds are beyond comparison.

Narrogin Club President Dayle Found helped me organise my visit in advance – such planning being vital for any trip to a remote club.

To me, it is important to 'muck in' at club level and I held the British flag up by spending my mornings cleaning and fettling gliders and my afternoons as log keeper and duty pilot. The locals got a bit of a shock when my British accent appeared on the area's ATC frequency – but I did manage to scare off a few of the fine students from Singapore Airlines flying training college who were out training in their Cessnas.

Being a gliding 'bum' – surfer style, self catering, and self dependant, provided me with a rare experience; evenings were filled with tall tales and debates on all things gliding.

Thanks to 1,000km record holder, Hilmer Geissler, and CFI Humphrey Leach, I got airborne in Narrogin's Puchacz duo and they soon started identifying my power flying bad habits.

"That's good," came the cry from behind me – along with "that's not good, don't do that!" I really appreciated their professional and active tuition as I rode the bumpy thermals.

I had hoped my previous flying experience would help – it did in procedural terms, but not in handling terms. But these two excellent teachers got me through my bad patch.

'It was one of those moments when, like a switch being pushed, I stopped over-controlling, started to use the rudder, and suddenly I was steering smoothly through cloudland in a blaze of colours'

Then one magical afternoon, as the big thermals eased off at 1730 hours, I found myself at 6,000 feet in cloudland with Mr Leach making amusing comments from the back and throwing me the compliment that it had all "started coming back" (to me). It was one of those moments when, like a switch being pushed, I stopped over-controlling, started to use the rudder, and suddenly I was steering smoothly through cloudland in a blaze of colours.

Re-soloing after a very long gap was important, but I did not go to Australia to rush through a course, grab a height or distance claim, and leave, so I did not fly all day and every day and instead settled back into a wonderful gliding club based existence of ground duties and ad-hoc rewards of flight.

But the running of an *ab-initio* course at Narrogin loomed, so I joined it. Instructors David Harris, Alan Arthur and Avon Furphy got it just right – pushing me but aware that I had no need to achieve something within a time frame.

As someone who has raced and rallied cars, as well as tested them at high speed for car-makers, I know how to make progress on a safety-led step by step basis – a test pilot taught me that. Narrogin's instructors were like minded with safety foremost – and with plenty of speed added to handling the Puchacz at low level, all of us being aware of its character traits.

The highlight of flying in WA was that it is done in crosswinds, and in thermals so strong the seat belts dug into me as I was heaved upwards, sideways, and downwards. Quick action on the stick to recover had to be learned early on.

Aerotow take-offs had to be good, and every landing required firm decision-making from the downwind leg to the roll-out. Nailing the speed and using the airbrakes as energy throttles had to be grasped quickly.

The Gliding Federation of Australia demands that the low tow position is used and I can now see why. The thermals are so strong that any upset to a glider ➢

➢ in the high tow could easily have fatal implications for the tug.

The GFA course structure also means that stalls, full spins, emergency situations and recovery are all part of the pre-solo structure. Learning to aerotow off a red, dirt runway, where the dust from the tug obscures your vision as you lift off and the crosswind whips at you, is character building...

If you try it, do remember to shut the air vents and the sliding, canopy panels, otherwise your face will be as red as mine was.

I got up towards 10,000 feet on several flights that lasted hours not minutes. Unfortunately, I had to leave WA just as my instructors were about to "finish me off" with letting me go on my own.

But somehow it did not matter. They had taught me to glide, and moments such as the eagles at 7,000 feet flying alongside me, and the views of salt pans and vast cloudscapes, are memories of communion with the sky that I shall never forget.

Heading off cross-country to places with names like Wandering, and Popynaning, under an acid blue sky with the variometer at plus 12 and the average at 10, were moments to treasure.

'Learning to aerotow off a red, dirt runway, where the dust from the tug obscures your vision and the crosswind whips at you, is character building...'

It was hot, the flies were huge and often came along for a flight, and you need to be part of the team. The reward was memorable flying and kindness from club members that cannot go unmentioned.

From Narrogin, I headed to the east coast at Bryon Bay to catch up with Australian gliding legend Ian McPhee – he has devoted most of his life to soaring and I hoped might do me some circuits in one of his motor gliders. Sadly the sky opened with a week of the worst storms in a hundred years, so we got greasy servicing engines and putting gliders back together.

Ian is a fan of teaching on motor gliders and believes that they are a great way to build stick time. The freedom of single engine, single person operation also makes huge sense: maybe the time of the motor glider/self sustainer really has come- finally?

Nearly everyone I met on my gliding trip in Australia agreed that if gliding on a global, not just local, basis, is to survive, it needs to adapt to the modern themes.

Asking young people to spend hours as ground crew before getting airborne will not attract those with today's need for instant gratification to our sport, however much we might reject their lack of traditional mindset.

And we have to provide modern slippery aircraft, and shiny facilities, as well as be aware of the marketing and PR needs of attracting new members.

All this is as true in the northern hemisphere as it is in the southern one, where, as I discovered, the debate and the issues are the same.

But for a grumpy old 40-something like me, just being around gliders and hanging around that huge Australian sky was sailplane nirvana. I had the best time of my life and by the time you read this will have sloped off on my own wings.





Lance Cole is a former columnist for *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Independent*. He is an internationally published journalist/ broadcaster, author of eight books on cars and aircraft and comes from a family with gliding links going back over 60 years. Lance crewed a Catalina flying boat through Africa in the 1990s. Concorde test pilot Brian Trubshaw wrote the foreword to Lance's book on the Vickers VC10 published by Crowood Aviation.

Left: Narrogin's Puchacz looks elegant over the dry brown heartlands of Western Australia

Below, left to right: A Blanik beauty on aerotow at Narrogin; Aussie gliding legend Ian McPhee at the controls of his Dimona at Bryon Bay GC; even Father Christmas is a glider pilot Down Under – naturally he flies a DG...; hot ships under a hot sky – 37 degrees centigrade and building at Narrogin



Aussie atmosphere at Narrogin under the sun *(all photographs by Lance Cole)*

A few tips to make your trip easier

- **Go with the right attitude and adapt to local customs**
- **Join in and don't be a whingeing Pom!**
- **Learn the GFA's 'CHAOTIC' pre-flight checklist – do not rely on UK list**
- **However highly experienced you may be, even if 5,000 hours plus, accept advice, and accept the need for at least two or three check flights under local conditions before expecting a solo flight in a club aircraft**
- **Purchase a fly net to go over your head for ground use**
- **Landing-out kit for remote outback flying**
- **Research local weather patterns and characteristics**
- **Pre-arrange transport to the club if it is in a remote location**
- **Arrange accommodation in advance**
- **Pack emergency food supplies for remote clubs.**

■ Lance would like to thank: Bendigo GC, Bryon GC, Camden GC, Narrogin GC, Bruce Stephenson Vintage Glider Club UK and Dave and Jenne Goldsmith Vintage Glider Club Australia, Ian McPhee, the Spicer family and the Kirk family. Lance travelled with Singapore Airlines through Trailfinders.





Return to the s



When Ian Easson heard that a Primary was on site at Portmoak and, what's more, had even been flying, he set out to investigate more about the syndicate behind this glider restoration project

FOR those of you who have already purchased my book *The Scottish Gliding Union – A History*, you will know that the back cover sports a picture of a Primary glider performing ground slides, albeit with wing holders on each wing preventing the aircraft getting higher than a couple of feet (if you haven't bought a copy yet, there are plenty left – available from the club [Sorry Ed, couldn't resist a plug]).

My father had experienced these ground slides and short hops when he was a teenager and I remember thinking how scary this must have been and how lucky we were in this modern age to be able to fly "real" gliders. So you can imagine my surprise when I heard that a Primary was on site and had even been flying – real flying, up the wire on our winch! And there were photos to prove it. With my "hack" hat on, I set off to investigate.

First stop, Pete Benbow. I had noticed the arrival of a large container on site last year and was told that it was going to be a workshop for Pete and the rest of the Furnell syndicate. When I caught up with Pete, he explained that their syndicate was set up to start a glider restoration project. Their criteria were fairly simple: the glider(s) would have to be of wooden construction; included in Annex II; be historically significant and, preferably, be of British construction.

Serendipity played its part when an eagle-eyed syndicate member discovered that a Slingsby Grasshopper was on offer at Keevil. On further investigation, it appeared that the machine ticked all the boxes "How much more Annex II could you get and still have wings!" said Pete. The owner of the machine, Al Stacey, was contacted and a deal was done, thereby enabling the syndicate to take ownership of its first Primary.

The machine was taken into the workshop at Portmoak to be prepared for CofA. At this stage, various SGU members started to pop into the workshop to have a look. In particular, Jim O'Donnell – an ex-ATC instructor – was able to provide some invaluable advice on the handling, rigging and flying of the aircraft. The machine was in such good condition that it needed only some minor maintenance work before being issued with a CofA.

'The great day dawned; the glider was towed out to the launch point and John strapped himself on (not in)'

OK, now it was ready to fly, but who was going to fly it? As various members took a step back, all eyes were on John Henry.

"So, John, have you ever flown one of these?"

"Oh yes," came the reply.

"And how long ago was this?"

"About 60 years."

"Does that mean you are current?"

"Probably, and I still have my goggles."

"OK, the job's yours."

The great day dawned; the glider was towed out to the launch point and John strapped himself on (not in). A small crowd of experts gathered and offered various bits of advice. A great debate ensued as to the suitability of CBSIFTCBE. A better mnemonic of CBSSSE was offered. The logic being that IFTCB were not fitted and, due to the seating facilities, the S should be triple-checked!

Neil, the winch driver, was briefed as to the low maximum launch speed and John launched to 600ft for a circuit and a safe landing – all to the great cheering from the assembled band of onlookers. The post-flight briefing was around the L/D of the machine – was it 8:1 or 10:1? – but the jury is still out on that one.

After John came back to earth, I asked him about his early experiences on type.

"I did my first ground slide way back in 1947 at Edinburgh's Turnhouse. This was before I joined the ATC to fly with their number one Gliding School at Dungavel. I remember my instructor was Malcolm Sinclair and the field at Dungavel was owned by the Duke of Hamilton.

"A year later I went to Lulsgate, near Bristol, on a holiday course and it was here that I got my A & B certificates in the Primary, under the watchful eyes of Arthur Hopkirk and Alwyn Sutcliffe. It wasn't until 1950 that I joined the SGU at Balado and, in 1958, obtained my instructors rating from Ann Welch.

"Although I still instruct at Portmoak, I never thought I would be using my skills to fly one of these fine gliders again. A truly memorable flight and one which, I'm sure, will be repeated in 2009. Thanks to the Furnell syndicate for giving me this opportunity."

The last word is from Pete Benbow. "If anyone has any pictures or anecdotal stories concerning this aircraft, or our other Slingsby (T31 XA 290), please let me know via the club."



It is more common to spot SGU's John Henry flying the club's Pawnee tug

■ Ian Easson is editor of the SGU club magazine *Portmoak Press*, has been flying for 15 years and has a Silver badge. He flies the club single-seater fleet of Juniors, Pegasse 101 and Discus B and is currently progressing towards his BI rating.

skies









The glider restoration syndicate had a fairly simple criteria for its project – the glider(s) would have to be of wooden construction; included in Annex II; be historically significant and, preferably, be of British construction.
The discovery of the Slingsby T38 Grasshopper XA 240, on offer at Keevil, ticked all the right boxes and here it is seen returning to the sky with John Henry at the controls – a mere 60 years since his last flight on type.
(Photos by Jim Cook and Sally Woolrich)

Expand your horizons



Ian Atherton



Having flown at 50 gliding sites around the UK and regularly organised club expeditions over the past few years, Ian Atherton has put some notes together to aid those who might like to organise their own exped to other UK sites

ALTHOUGH many experienced pilots regularly visit other clubs for competitions, a club exped gives pilots with a wide range of experience levels the chance to visit another club with a group of friends in a non-competitive environment. It's a great way to expand your horizons and gain new experience in a fun and relaxed way.

I started visiting other clubs with a couple of gliding buddies almost as soon as we'd gone solo. It was a great way to broaden our experience. At first we would just pitch up on spec for a day visit having looked on an air chart that morning for a place we liked the look of.

We didn't particularly expect to fly solo, but just see new places, meet new people and fly new types. Usually we'd have a great time, but sometimes we'd have trouble finding the club and arrived too late in the day to get our names sufficiently high up the list to fly. On other occasions we'd arrive to find that the winch was unserviceable or that the airfield was too boggy. Once we even arrived at a site to find a notice on the locked gates stating that the airfield was now closed and the club had moved to a new site!

So, gradually we came to realise that visiting clubs was generally more successful if we organised it in advance and could stay longer. It often turned out better if we were able to take some more experienced pilots or even an instructor along. We found it was particularly useful to have someone with us who'd been there before.

Arranging a club exped to another BGA site is really not that complicated. Most clubs welcome visitors and are only too willing to aid you in any way they can. The key to any exped is good planning and effective communication, which, with the aid of the internet and mobile phones, is now easier than ever. The 'find a club' link on the BGA website is a particularly good place to start.

First ask yourself some simple questions:

- **Is there anywhere you particularly want to visit?** A particular part of the country you've never been to, or somewhere you can maximise your soaring potential.
- **Why do you want to fly at that particular club?** The fleet may be more modern or extensive than your own, the area may provide better thermals, easier cross-country flying than your own site, less restricted airspace, ridge or wave soaring opportunities.
- **Is the club open when you are planning to be there?** This sounds an obvious question, but many clubs are not open midweek. Some are only open full time for part of the year or by arrangement.
- **Do you want to achieve particular goals?** Solo soaring, ridge and wave flying, advanced training, badge hunting, type conversions, cross-country tasks, etc. Remember that exped members may be taking part for very different reasons, with different expectations, so be sure to find out what exactly is on offer.
- **What is the best time of year for the weather you hope to experience?** Cross-country flights are usually easier and less daunting in the Midlands or the flatlands in the east of England. Good thermal soaring opportunities can be available throughout the summer, but for low experience pilots concerned about the availability of landable fields, mid summer onwards may be better once the harvest has begun.

'Airfield hopping' can be relatively easy throughout much of eastern England where many old World War Two airfields are now home to gliding and flying clubs, with some areas still virtually free of restricted airspace. Ridge and wave sites are regarded as more attractive to visitors in spring and autumn when the UK tends to get stronger winds and in winter when the flatland thermals are gone, but in fact most ridge sites provide good soaring all year round.

- **What will you do on poor weather days?** Does the club have a gliding simulator, or an instructor available who can give ground briefings when you can't fly? What other facilities are close by – tourist attractions, cinemas, pubs, distilleries, etc.
- **What briefings and check flights are visitors expected to undertake?** Research this by contacting the club directly and discussing your group's experience levels. It's best to talk with a senior instructor, as office staff may not be able to give you the detail you require. At large flat sites check-flights are usually not too onerous, but busy professional clubs, clubs with small sites or difficult surrounding terrain may require significantly more P2 flying than you might expect.

That said, advanced instruction is always worth while, particularly at complex hill sites. Flying with a local pundit can really pay dividends, as you will quickly learn more than by piecing it together yourself. If you're



Prepping the Junior at the Talgarth exped *(Ian Atherton)*

hoping to instruct you'll need to discuss this with the local CFI and gain his permission, ideally well in advance.

● **If you are planning to take your own private or club gliders, are there any restrictions on numbers?** Trailer parking, staking out rigged gliders overnight, hangarage, etc, may be limited and usually advanced bookings are required. The main advantages of taking your own glider(s) are greater availability and it helps keep costs down. If you plan to take a club glider make sure of availability well in advance.

● **What are the costs to visitors?** There are often additional expenses such as temporary membership, trailer parking and camping fees to consider.

● **Does the club offer catering and/or accommodation, does it allow camping or have links with local B&Bs, etc?** Many clubs have some sort of accommodation, but this may be limited and can book up fast. Some have professional catering, whilst others have a members' kitchen.

Most of these queries can be sorted out by checking websites, via email or a simple phone call to the club.

Once you've decided where to go, you can 'advertise' the exped and get a list of additional interested pilots. Don't be afraid to actively encourage people to take part. You may need to limit numbers depending on where you intend to go and the kit available, if so create a reserve list in case anyone drops out. It can be counter-productive to take too many pilots if glider availability is restricted as you can end up with everyone struggling to get enough flying. I find a good number is six to 10 pilots of varying experience levels.

Having established a 'firm' group, you'll need to thrash out some logistics for transport, accommodation, etc. In my experience it is much better to treat people as adults and let them manage this themselves whilst providing good co-ordination. I suggest delegating some tasks so each person is included and everyone is thoroughly committed to the success of the exped.

By sharing the responsibilities, it prevents one or two individuals becoming overburdened. It is useful to nominate a treasurer to manage any communal funds. Of course, don't forget to take all the usual documents such as medicals, logbooks, certificates, glider insurance, etc and remember to relax, fly safely and have fun!

So, whether you're an experienced flatlander who's excited about the idea of ridge-running in Wales, or a Bronze pilot who's looking to take his first steps cross-country above friendly terrain in the uncongested skies of East Anglia, a thermal pundit looking for wave in Scotland or an early solo pilot yearning to fly a hot ship, there's almost certainly a club in the UK that can help you achieve your ambitions and expand your horizons.





■ Ian Atherton, who flies airliners to pay for his soaring, started gliding in 1986 whilst studying in Sheffield. Ian has a Gold badge with one Diamond and currently owns an ASW 20. He particularly enjoys exploring new soaring opportunities and encouraging pilots to fulfil their potential. Ian is the Deputy CFI at Norfolk Gliding Club, Tibenham, which operates seven days a week all year round. He is also a country member at Talgarth. Both clubs welcome expeditions.

Preparing to launch at Tibenham (Ian Atherton) and (top) Mike Hellewell gets excited (John Kinley)



Talgarth wave *(Ian Atherton)*

Flat vs ridge sites

GLIDING from flat or ridge sites provides pilots with very different experiences. Here are two examples of the different advantages they offer:

● Norfolk Gliding Club has been operating from its former World War Two airfield at Tibenham for 50 years. With the UK's highest temperatures and lowest rainfall throughout the summer, few airspace restrictions and a hospitable landscape, East Anglia provides an excellent environment for low stress cross-country thermal soaring. Tibenham is a large airfield with three excellent hard runways and extensive landable grass areas. Launches by winch (often to above 2000ft when using the long runway) and aerotow are available. The club operates seven days a week all year and has five club gliders plus a G109 SLMG used for BGA and NPPL training. Airfield Manager and professional instructor Mick Hughes is available midweek to support your expedition.

● In contrast, Talgarth is a small airfield home to Black Mountains GC set amongst stunning scenery. With soarable conditions on most flying days, it has the longest average flight times of any UK club. It offers aerotow launching with impressive ridge runs and wave flying in almost any wind direction, as well as good thermal soaring. The club is open seven days a week from March to October and weekends during the winter offering training at all levels, including advanced wave and hill soaring with mountain soaring pundit Bo Nilsson, who instructs for Gavin Wills at Omarama during the UK winter.

You can contact Norfolk GC at manager@norfolkglidingclub.com or 01379 677207 and Talgarth at enquiries@blackmountainsgliding.co.uk or 01874 711463.

■ What's your favourite location for a club exped and why? Do contact *S&G* and let us know. Contact details can be found on page 3 of each issue.

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Meeting the challenge

When the CAA advised that any radio operator on the ground at Portsmouth Naval needed formal Air/Ground Operator certification, Keith Morton called on his previous experience to train the club's 30-plus duty instructors



Portsmouth Naval's Keith Morton with his airfield simulation to prepare instructors for air/ground radio qualifications in line with CAA requirements for all radio operators on the ground to be certificated (Neil Shaw)

WHEN I joined Portsmouth Naval GC (PNGC) in 1959, none of the gliders used radios. During the 1960s, radios started to emerge, but operated only on the frequencies that were allocated to the BGA.

Radios in this era were very heavy, used valves and consumed considerable amounts of power from large lead acid batteries. Their operational duration in the air was very short. Radios tended to be fitted only in gliders that were used in competitions for pilots to be able to communicate with their ground crews but, due to the short life available from these radios, this facility was used only during the early stages of a competition flight to enable the pilot to advise of an early out-landing and to be quickly retrieved for a re-light.

As the flight continued, there was no more radio communication and information about an out-landing was conveyed by telephone. Similarly, there was no requirement in those days for glider pilots to communicate with the duty instructor or others.

Up until 781 Squadron left Lee-on-the-Solent, Search and Rescue (SAR) facilities for the Solent area were provided by the Royal Navy whose helicopters communicated with Air Traffic Control (ATC) via UHF radios. On the arrival of civilian-operated SAR helicopters, communications then changed to VHF and pilots of these aircraft were more concerned as to the whereabouts of gliders and tugs when they departed and returned to the airfield. The only way to obtain this information was to call the duty instructor on a gliding frequency.

The problem with this was that the radios in the helicopters were so powerful that every gliding club in southern England also received these communications, blotting out their own operations – not a tolerable situation!

As the station radio frequency at that time was allocated to the RN, they were able to give dispensation to PNGC to operate on the station frequency without any other form of licensing – problem solved.

The next issue was that the Navy then left the airfield at Lee-on-the-Solent and the allocation of the frequency 135.70Mhz was transferred to the Fleetlands Heliport just two miles away. Fleetlands at that time was also Navy-operated so the dispensation to PNGC to use this frequency without specific licensing continued – a system that worked well as Fleetlands is within the Lee-on-the-Solent ATZ.

Fleetlands Heliport then became privatised and, soon after, the CAA appeared on the scene. The CAA advised that two adjacent airfields could not operate on a common frequency. After various discussions with PNGC, Fleetlands, the Airfield Management and others, the CAA issued Lee-on-the-Solent with its own frequency of 118.925Mhz on 27 August, 2008.

The CAA then advised that any radio operator on the ground – the duty instructor – had to be certificated and approved formally as an air/ground operator.

'Radios in the helicopters were so powerful that every gliding club in southern England also received these communications'

Additionally PNGC was required to provide new powerful mains-operated radios for the ground station, and all the older radios in gliders with fixed channels had to be recrystaled to the new frequency, or even totally replaced, at the club's expense.

So now all the 30 or so instructors at the PNGC have to be trained as air/ground operators – not an easy task as the majority have little or no power flying experience and of course the training and the test is all based on power flying. (The FRTOL is no longer a valid qualification for an air/ground operator so everyone has to take the training and tests.)

The other problem is that there is no tower at Lee for instructors to go and watch and learn from an experienced air/ground operator since air/ground operators will be required only when gliding is taking place.

All GA power aircraft otherwise operate without such an operator as it is an unlicensed airfield. So this is where I came in!

I used to be a power flying instructor as well as a gliding instructor. I was also the deputy airfield manager at the Old Sarum Airfield near Salisbury and had conducted training in the art of becoming an air/ground operator.

The training consists of some two hours' briefing on the theory side (CAP452 and CAP 413), followed by a one-hour briefing on typical calls that an operator would be required to make. This is followed by two hours of answering practice written papers, which actually require "joined-up writing" type of answers, not your more usual multiple choice type.

Then a two-hour debrief, followed by a 60-minute written test. And then to the practical! That is based on running a simulated airfield for 30 minutes during which every conceivable situation occurs from theoretical pilots doing circuits to MAYDAYs and obtaining clearances for aircraft departing on IFR Flights.

The tests are set by the CAA, which also provides a list of approved examiners. Our examiner flies at Lee-on-the-Solent and works locally at the ATC centre in Swanwick.

Training for the practical test is all on a one-to-one basis and takes between four to six hours. Even then, you are not finished yet, as there now follows a two-hour briefing on the new airfield procedures and the equipment to be used.

Only then is your Certificate of Competence finally signed and, as an air/ground operator, you are free to operate the radio at the launch point once more – together with a private radio to communicate with the winch and a mobile phone to talk to other airfield users (whilst of course carrying out your normal duty instructor activities).

Life at Lee is a little different these days!

Avoid controlled airspace

Gliding operates in an increasingly complex airspace environment and there are increasing numbers of glider pilots flying cross-country both in club and competition flying. The newly-formed BGA Flight Operations Working Group has been considering airspace safety and part of its work includes a short series of articles aimed at providing practical advice and reminders for all pilots, regardless of experience. The following has been put together by Peter Moorehead, an ATCO at Yeovil, a current full-rated instructor and one-time CFI of the Mendip Gliding Club



Staying out of controlled airspace involves your ability to read and understand a map (make sure it is up to date) or your GPS and then to use your navigation skills (Pete Stratten)

WE FLY in sometimes crowded and complex airspace. Staying out of controlled airspace is a skill we must learn, and like any other skill it needs to be practised and, if necessary, re-learnt. Get it wrong and you might meet something bigger and faster than you. You might also get on the wrong side of the authorities, which can prove to be very expensive.

You should also remember that every infringement provides further ammunition to those who want more control and regulation and who continue to press for mandatory transponder carriage.

Staying out of controlled airspace involves your ability to read and understand a map or your GPS and then use your navigation skills. Many of you will fly at clubs where controlled airspace (CAS) is a fact of life. Pilots used to being on the edge or beneath CAS are aware of the precise limits of the airspace, those who normally operate well away from airspace need to plan and navigate carefully.

Flight preparation

With the advent of the internet and the efforts of people like Weatherjack and his team, it is becoming easier to identify a good flying day. The evening before a flight you can look at the forecast weather, plan a route, check the NOTAMS and prepare your maps. This is also the time to set up your GPS if you can, or at least allow time before the flight.

On the day of the flight things will often change, including NOTAMS. Better conditions may enable you to extend your route, or conditions in flight may be different, causing you to choose another task. In these situations can you quickly and accurately replan your flight?

Out-of-date map

Every year new CAA 1/2 Mil and 1/4 Mil maps (correctly referred to as charts) are issued. Airspace changes are well publicised in the aviation press and, of course, in the United Kingdom Aeronautical Information Package (UK AIP). This is a mighty three-volume tome and is not for the faint-hearted. You should be fully aware of all local changes. There maybe changes further afield that you are not aware of and an out-of-date map will let you down.

GPS

GPS systems vary. Some of the basic units are difficult to interpret. Is there space in a crowded cockpit for you to clearly see the GPS in all light conditions? Does it have sufficient space in the database and is the airspace data up to date and properly scaled? What is its battery life? GPS is a wonderful aid but in the UK you still need an up-to-date map.

Lost

If you are lost then you need to do something. Most importantly, accept that you are lost, continuing on in the hope that things will get better is not an option. If your last known position was a good distance from CAS and you can remain airborne you might be able to sort things out. If, however, you know that you were close to CAS, then retracing your route if you can may be the solution. If that's not practical, then consider landing!

Spend 15 minutes in a 20knot wind and you will drift five miles. It is very easy to know roughly where you are but to misjudge your actual position. If your route is close to CAS then it is vitally important that you choose features on the ground that will ensure you are outside airspace.

Close to the edge?

Controllers are told that they should aim to keep aircraft under their control at least two miles from the edge of CAS. That's about 40 seconds when an aircraft is flying at 180knts. It will take only one missed radio call before an aircraft leaves CAS. Is that where you would like to be? You might have right of way according to the rules of the air but you cannot outrun an Airbus in an Astir!

Mis-read the map

Planning a flight on the ground is one thing, keeping on top of things in the air is another.

You will be fully occupied in flying the aircraft, looking out to avoid collisions, looking for the next source of lift as well as navigating. In this high workload situation could you miss something?

As an example of how complex our airspace is, look at a typical cross-country route in the south of England from Melton Mowbray near Leicester to Morton in Marsh airfield near Banbury, a flight of about 100km. Within five miles of that track there are at least 17 changes of airspace levels as well as three Aerodrome Traffic Zones to be aware of. Some levels may be high, they are however lines on the map that you will have to understand, even so there are 10 levels changes below 6000ft.

Understanding your altimeter

Flying on the wrong pressure setting is a major cause of airspace infringements.

Glider pilots routinely fly on their own airfield QFE. You should refer to this as flying at a HEIGHT. This is fine for flying in the immediate local area and pretty useful for final glides. Almost everyone else flies on the QNH or above the transition level on the Standard pressure setting of 1013.2. If you don't understand the difference and the reasons for using the correct settings, you should not be flying cross-country.

ALTITUDE will give you your height above mean sea level (amsl). On all air maps airspace will always be depicted as either an ALTITUDE or a FLIGHT LEVEL (FL)

When using a radio to report your vertical position use the words HEIGHT if you are on the QFE, ALTITUDE on the QNH and FLIGHT LEVEL if you are using 1013.2.

At my club 2,000ft QFE and 3,000ft QNH are the same place! Setting the QNH is simple. Prior to take-off, you set the altimeter to the airfield elevation. You then take a note of the subscale reading, this will give you your own airfield QNH. Having reset the altimeter to zero for the launch take a note of the new reading, this is the QFE and you can reset it for landing on return.

If you have forgotten to do this, you can adjust the altimeter in flight to add on your airfield's height above sea level and the new subscale reading will be a reasonably accurate QNH. You can achieve the same thing by adding 1millibar(mb) for each 30ft of airfield elevation. For example, if your airfield elevation is 600ft and the QFE is 995mb then 600/30 = 20. 995+20 gives you and airfield QNH of 1015mb

If you can't remember all this, make yourself a crib sheet and keep it in the cockpit – perhaps in the back of the DI book. If you suffer from brain fade and don't know your own airfield elevation, it's on the map!

You can also get QNH from most active airfields – if you don't have an RT licence but you do have suitable radio – just by listening to what is going on normally on the approach/radar frequency.

The frequencies for all licensed airfields are on your map. You will find them on a list on the side of the map or in the details around each airfield.

On long cross-countries you can also listen to the various VOLMET frequencies (see box top right).

Useful things to do

Get the current maps. Review them and have a look at the routes you may be considering for your next epic flight be it 50 or 1,500km.

Ensure that any maps on display in your club are up to date and legible. Get rid of the out-of-date maps.

Keep the information in your GPS up to date. This can be downloaded from the internet on to any computer and can also be used during lectures.

Arrange refresher training. It can be for small or large numbers. You might consider an experienced power flying instructor to act as a facilitator.

Get hold of a copy of Memory Map. Memory Map can be used on PDAs, although many pilots use specific glider programmes. On your home computer you can use it to plan flights, you can expand it to look at the fine detail on the map. In the classroom it can be a superb training aid. Details can be found at *www.memory-map.co.uk*

If you have contacts with a power pilot, arrange a flight where you concentrate solely on the navigation while he or she concentrates on the flying and operation of the aircraft.

Arrange a pub quiz-style club evening. The subjects can cover anything that a cross-country pilot should know.

Instructors – ask questions. Next time a pilot seeks approval, even for a local flight, ask him about the local airspace. Pay particular attention to any Letters of Agreement that your club has. Bronze badge candidates must be tested thoroughly on all aspects of airspace awareness, altimetry and navigation.

Beware of visiting pilots! Raise awareness of airspace safety issues and education among all club pilots.

CFIs – do you keep a notice board with all the local airspace described on it and of course importantly is it up to date? If you haven't got one, should you have one?

Finally...

You may see a glider operating inside controlled airspace; it is likely that the pilot has permission to be there.

Don't assume that you can join him. He may have been given a specific clearance restricting his altitude, position or time allowed in CAS. On the other hand he may be in the wrong!

In the second part of this feature, I will explain the ins and outs of Aerodrome Traffic Zones (ATZs), and Military Air Traffic Zones (MATZs), what you can do, what you cannot do, but also what you should do to be safe and demonstrate good airmanship.

VOLMET FREQUENCIES

Location	Frequency	Airports covered
London Main	135.375	Amsterdam, Brussels, Dublin, Glasgow, London LGW, London LHR, London STN, Manchester, Paris CDG
London North	126.6	Blackpool, East Midlands, Leeds Bradford, Liverpool, London LGW, Manchester, Newcastle, Isle of Man, Teesside
London South	128.6	Birmingham, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cardiff, Jersey, Luton, Norwich, Southampton, Southend
Scottish	125.725	Aberdeen, Belfast BFS, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, London LHR, Prestwick, Stornoway, Sumburgh
Dublin	127.0	Dublin, Shannon, Cork, Belfast BFS, Glasgow, Prestwick, Manchester, London LHR, London LGW

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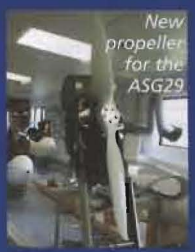
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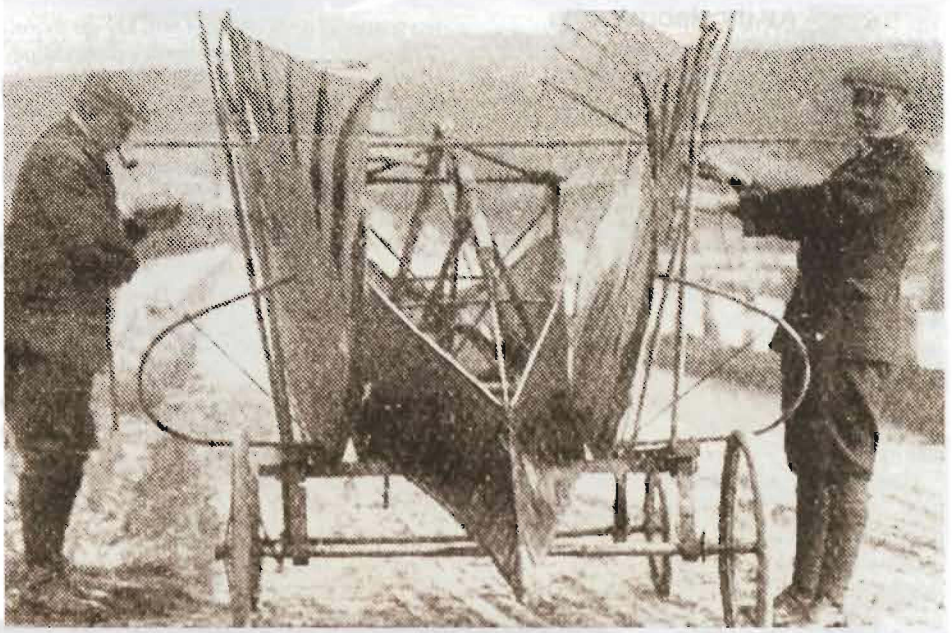
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Soaring through a century

History was made in just under one minute on 27 June, 1909 when a glider built by José Weiss achieved a height gain of 10 metres. Southdown's Andrew Jarvis looks at the background of this gliding pioneer



José Weiss (left) and Eric Gordon England with Olive on Houghton Causeway (photo courtesy of Amberley Working Museum, West Sussex)

THIS year sees the centenaries of a number of aviation 'firsts', but the one which probably stands out for the gliding community is that in which a French-born artist and a 16-year-old Sussex lad collaborated to kick off a movement which was to become global, competitive and far-reaching in the technologies employed. They could be said to be gliding's equivalent of the Wright Brothers.

José Weiss, artist and gliding pioneer, settled in West Sussex in the early years of the last century. He was a Frenchman and a complex man with seven children, some of whom helped with his flying experiments. His paintings sold well. They were very traditional, mostly classic landscapes, far removed from the European impressionists. By contrast, his gliders were highly individual. He built hundreds, all different, clearly favouring bird-like designs. He seems to have hated straight wings, fins and tailplanes. The elegant wings contrast with quite dreadful undercarriages.

He was working towards powered machines, which perhaps one could call motor gliders, so maybe he needed the heavy wheels and axles that he added to his later creations.

The glider that made the soaring flight was named Olive after one of his daughters.

John Land, the Librarian and archivist at the Amberley Working Museum in West Sussex (*www.amberleymuseum.co.uk*) generously spent an afternoon with me, filling in the Weiss background, and outlining the construction of Weiss gliders. The museum holds a substantial archive of Weiss photographs and papers.

The airframe of Olive is of bamboo and rattan (which resembles cane) with bound cord joints. The crescent wings have a span of eight metres. The leading edge is a very stout cane – not an arc but a parabola. The 14 ribs have an elegant section, with reflexed tips for stability. And is that a wing warping arrangement? No spars are shown, but photos suggest a series of thin spanwise timbers rather like stringers on a fuselage.

The fabric covering is on top and bottom, with covering on top surface only, towards the rear. The fabric was not doped; John Land believes Weiss used tar for air-proofing.

But what a beautiful wing this is… the front view shows a subtlety which almost looks like the Concorde. Finally, the fuselage is really slippery by Edwardian standards, and the skid looks neat and effective.

Perhaps it is no surprise that this gem of a glider, when flown from Amberley Mount on the South Downs (and just two miles from today's Parham Airfield, home of Southdown Gliding Club), achieved that first ever height-gain, and hence true soaring flight.

The pilot was Eric Gordon England, a local 16-year-old with an evident flair for things mechanical (he lived until the mid-1970s and became an Austin 7 expert – but more of that later*).

'But what a beautiful wing this is... the front view shows a subtlety which almost looks like the Concorde'

The date of the historic flight was 27 June, 1909. The gain of height was (estimated at) 10 metres. There must have been a northerly wind to generate lift on the ridge which is now so well known to Southdown club members. The flight duration was 59 seconds, and the landing at the bottom of the hill was 800 metres from the launchpoint.

In a sense, this brief flight was the high point of José Weiss's contribution to aviation. Weiss died just after World War 1. His youngest daughter, Josie, told me some years ago that he became deeply depressed by the militarisation of aircraft, and even felt he had unwittingly contributed to the wartime death toll.

But he must have inspired countless people; he had a huge circle of friends, including the great Frederick Handley Page, whose name is always associated with crescent wings. He was also instrumental in helping to form a local 'gliding' club, shortly after this flight, called the Amberley Soaring Society. It was short lived by all accounts but I wonder if it inspired other clubs to form and eventually become what the UK movement is today?

To commemorate this little-known but seminal aviation event, the Southdown Gliding Club (Parham) is planning a celebration for Saturday 27 June, 2009. It will be hosting members and their gliders from the Vintage Gliding Club and hopes other members of the gliding community will also visit the club that day.

For more details, contact the club by email at gliding1930@tiscali.co.uk

Naturally our plans are evolving all the time. There will be more details before long, on the Southdown Gliding Club website, *www.sgc1.org*

*We came across an interesting footnote in our research. Eric Gordon England, following his youthful gliding involvement, eventually became involved in motor racing and designed and built a number of racing cars based on the Austin 7 chassis. He persuaded Mr Austin that the only way to make this car popular was to race them and that he would do it!

Mr Austin was somewhat taken aback by this cheeky proposal but it worked and Austin supplied Gordon England a car to work on within weeks of his proposal. Southdown has been contacted by an owner of one of these vintage racing cars and we hope it can be brought along for static display on the day. The owner also hopes to bring along Gordon England's remaining daughter!

Air League raises the bar



As it celebrates its centenary year, the Air League is making plans for the next 100 years. Much of its current work has a direct effect on gliding, reports Andy Perkins

IF YOU type "100 years old" into Google, the first posting you are greeted by is about a woman who, at the age of 100, is lighting up her 170,000 cigarette from her birthday cake!

The second posting is much more impressive with "anglers hook 100-year-old monster fish weighing over 35 stone..."

Even so, after a little thought even the latter begs the question WHY? and both provoke images that, unchecked, could cause irreparable damage to even the most developed mind. My least favourite national newspaper is responsible. I will say no more...

These stories do however offer much hope in my eyes, as there is no mention of reaching the end of the line (apart from the fish) or the "well done for getting that far" phrases that I expected from my search.

This year marks the centenary of the Air League and, instead of just wishing aviation good luck over the next 100 years and bowing out, the bar has been raised and the task to be relevant for the next 100 years undertaken. A lot of the work coming to fruition over 2009 will have a direct effect on the gliding community.

An initiative undertaken by the Air League a few years ago to develop the relationship with Air Cadets and gliding is due to be launched in April. These two organisations in conjunction with the BGA, Service gliding clubs and GAPAN (Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators) have developed a scheme for Air Cadets that have gone solo and have reached the end of their time in the ATC.

These leavers will be offered the opportunity to join sport gliding as we know it and, with a specially developed syllabus, receive conversion training to enter the world of Junior gliding in the UK.

To ensure their success and encourage ex-cadets to join sport gliding, GAPAN and The Air League have generously agreed to sponsor up to 80 £200 scholarships to those joining gliding. There will be more information on this and other initiatives enhancing what is on offer to junior glider pilots in the next issue.

To celebrate flying in its entirety, The Air League flying day that has traditionally been held at Bicester will be held at IWM Duxford. The date is 14 June 2009.

'The day is set to be awesome, with free flying, talks by some of the best in aviation, display flying, and information on getting into a flying career'

Put it in your diary now. The day is set to be awesome, with free flying, talks by some of the best in aviation, display flying, access to the museum, and information on getting into a flying career for those of you who never want to work for living.

It is also rumoured that a local pub will be open to receive anyone who fancies a couple of beers afterwards. Details will be emailed to those on the Junior BGA subscription list.

Finally, as you read this, the winners for the Air League gliding scholarships will be notified about their cross-country, aerobatic or SLMG NPPL training awards.

Again these have been made possible through use of reserve funding and some generous donations by glider pilots to make them happen.

We need further support to maintain these scholarships in the future. If you are able, or can twist someone else's arm to support this scheme, please don't hesitate to let me know.

www.airleague.co.uk



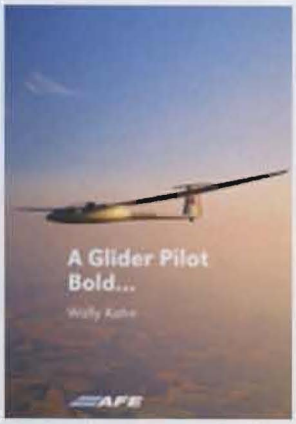
Moses and Jenny Tye. This year's Flying Day will be held at Duxford on 14 June

(Andy Perkins)

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A Glider Pilot Bold...

AFE, second edition 2008
198 pages £12.95
ISBN: 978-1-90655-906-9



IF YOU'VE never had the pleasure of meeting Wally Kahn, one of doyens at Lasham, you can through *A Glider Pilot Bold...*, but don't expect this republished and updated version of his book to be a paean of self-aggrandisement from an old, bold pilot.

This is more a book about gliding's post-war years (gliding's teenage-hood, if you like), packed with stories about people, battles with bureaucracy and the sheer fun of belonging to an outrageously boisterous, fledgling sport when nothing was seemingly impossible if you had the wit and nerve to do it.

True, you will learn something of Wally's character through the battles he and others fought for gliding, and Lasham in particular, over the last 60 years (I wouldn't like to have sparred with him and his cronies as the Sir Humphreys of the Ministry found), but you'll discover even more about the people and larger-than-life characters who nurtured gliding and helped make it what it is today.

Happily, this revised version has been expanded to include more tales of gliding's personalities and some of the later ones (the Jones family) – and very welcome they are, too.

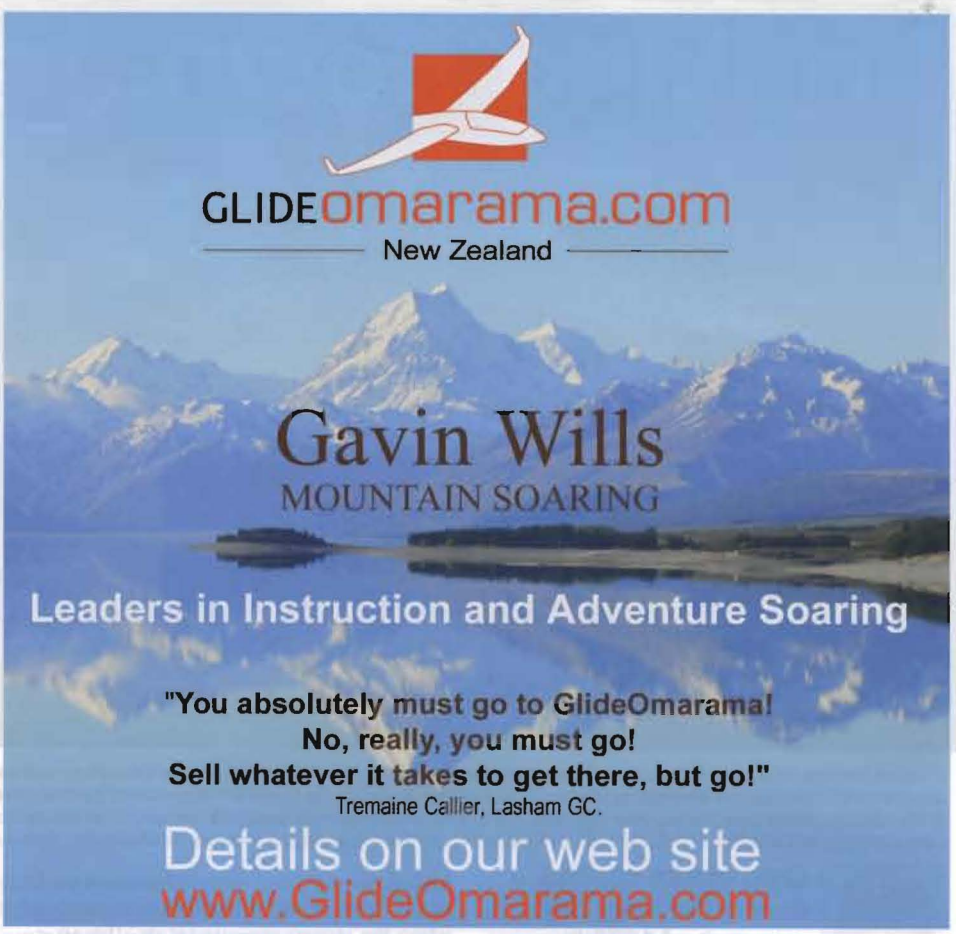
In his Preface from the first printing of the book in 1998, Wally says: "The increasing demands made on the modern racing pilot have, to my mind, had a detrimental effect on the social, clubby atmosphere which prevailed earlier and gave the sport tremendous cohesion and to all pilots a sense of belonging to the same sporting family.

"For that reason I have tried to tell some stories about events and people which, if not recorded now, will be lost in the fullness of time, which would be a very great pity."

He's right and reading this book you do realise that nowadays we have lost something.

Whether you're new to the sport and would like to learn more about some of the people and events that shaped gliding, or whether you have simply never quite managed to pick up a copy, one thing's for sure, you'll have a very enjoyable read if you do.

Nick Wall





Looking down on the past



A classic Norman 'motte and bailey' castle photographed from a motor glider. This one is at Pen-Rhos, Monmouthshire. Note more earthworks in the field at the top left. There are four main conditions that show archaeological sites from the air. One is the stress on crops, usually cereals, caused by dry conditions or poor nutrition on stony ground; two is the relief map of the land that occurs when the sun is at a very low angle in clear atmosphere evenings; the third is rapid growth of grass after silage cropping or new growth after ploughing and seeding, and four is snow or frost dusting across the landscape showing the equivalent of low sun but without the long shadows (John Sorrell)



Crop marks spotted during the long, dry summer of 1976 lay behind John Sorrell's 'obsession' with researching archaeological discoveries from a motor glider

I AM a long-term keen glider pilot and had been introduced to gliding as a sport when I went on a holiday at Land's End airfield back in 1968. I was terrified and captivated at the same time. I have been exploiting the natural energy in the air to travel and soar over the landscape since then.

It was the long, dry summer of 1976 when I first started to notice cropmarks in fields. The most memorable was by a ruined windmill; a complete Romano-British Temple appeared in a field adjacent – it turned out to be previously unknown. Interestingly enough, there never has been a drought like that year – the temple has never reappeared.

It was not until I obtained my PPL some years ago that aerial photography and active searching for unknown sites became easy and, for a while, an obsession, as I had bought a share in a RF5b (a delightful and docile powered glider) which was ideal for my purposes (I still glide and own a share in a Ventus).

What has struck me is just how much human activity has altered the landscape and just how much of the earlier activity still shows even under recent alteration. A good example of that is Chepstow racecourse and Piercefield park. A relatively recent addition to the fabric of civilisation, one only has to look down on the course in low sunlight to see all sorts of earlier features not destroyed when the racecourse was set up. The art is reading the results, and the difficult part – the interpretation.

I became an avid scrutineer of the land beneath me during dry summers and low evening light from the RF5. When I had found several other sites, I took up excavating a couple of them with a local archaeology group. I now have quite a number of new ancient sites, all previously unknown to those who keep the records (all reported).

An important aspect of aerial archaeological research is to constantly revisit a site, a luxury that the professionals cannot achieve. This must be done as different light conditions, different crops, changing farming methods and drought show different features at different times – but mostly nothing at all.

'It was not until I obtained my PPL that aerial photography and active searching for unknown sites became easy and, for a while, an obsession'

There are four main conditions that show archaeological sites from the air. One is the stress on crops, usually cereals, caused by dry conditions or poor nutrition on stony ground; two is the relief map of the land that occurs when the sun is at a very low angle in clear atmosphere evenings; the third is rapid growth of grass after silage cropping or new growth after ploughing and seeding, and four is snow or frost dusting across the landscape showing the equivalent of low sun but without the long shadows.

Unfortunately, dry spells without rain long enough to stress crops are rather rare in South Wales and tend to occur in little groups of years and then nothing for a long time. The landscape of Gwent and surrounding areas has a predominance of arable fields and pasture with clay geology, which require very dry conditions in order to show any marks and several sites appear only on very rare occasions. Cereal crops also tend to be deeply ploughed each year and the underground features that cause cropmarks are gradually diminished.

The very best conditions for aerial photography are evenings where the atmosphere is very clear with a low sun, There is so much landscape to search on these days and only a short time to do it. The Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains are mainly as prehistoric man left them and reveal Neolithic and Bronze Age settlements and funerary monuments from a time when the climate was warmer.

Archaeological remains by periods

The earliest period that has left any visible remains in the landscape below is that of the Neolithic (4,500-2,300 BC). Many of these are famous and consist of stone circles, long barrows and causeway camps. However, hidden in the landscape are many more exciting things to discover. Look out for new cursuses in dry weather in crops – double parallel lines traversing fields straight through hedges anything from a few hundred yards to a mile long, often with curved ends. I have one in South Wales but I have yet to determine its true length.

The purpose of a cursus is open still to



Clockwise from top left: A cropmark of a previously unrecorded Bronze Age ringbarrow showing in ripening barley; Chepstow Racecourse in summer evening light – fields and plough furrows showing beneath the later racecourse plus several other items that could be either ancient or modern; White Castle, Monmouthshire – a typical medieval curtain wall castle with moat and extensive outer defences imposed on an ancient landscape; the photographic platform – our RF5b in its 'high vis' livery; a small Romano-British defended village on the high plain of Trelleck above the Wye Valley, shown in false colour *(John Sorrell)*

interpretation, but is most probably a ritual processional way. Henges are sub-circular features with a ditch on the inside, also a ritual site, and there are many still to be located – mostly either ploughed out or covered by hillwash (soil moving downhill by natural means over a long period of time).

Next comes the Bronze Age (2,300- 500 BC) with many more earthworks in the landscape. Most common are barrows both as tumps and as circular rings. Many of these are still to be located and show well in cereal crops – not to be confused with those created by aliens though! Boundary markers in the form of 'cross dykes' are a common feature of hills – any bank (with quarry ditch) traversing a ridge of gentle hill is likely to be one on those – Wiltshire is has more than its fair share.

The Iron Age (500BC to 50AD) has left the most visible remains in the form of hillforts. Sometimes just with one ditch and bank and sometimes with two, three or even four concentric rings of earthworks. The larger ones are prestige sites built largely for show. For every one hillfort there are at least 20 smaller ringworks (small defended sites for farming groups) in the surrounding countryside. Look out for them as shadow sites and cropmarks. There are still many smaller hillforts yet to be identified. In South Wales alone I have discovered several – mostly faint rings on high ground or in fields in good agricultural land. These hillforts are mainly village settlements with a defensive ring.

The Romans (50-400AD) just littered the country with buildings, roads, towns and country estates (villas). Roman villas tend only to show as cropmarks in dry summers. The most visible features are the Roman roads. If you know where they are going, it is possible to navigate by them (ie the Cotswolds). Surprisingly, only a few major roads are known positively, the rest only by implication.

Tracing the Roman roads in South Wales is difficult as they are rarely straight lines. I have successfully built up a network of invasion routes in the mountains, giveaways are cuttings in hillsides, faint causeways and aligning hedgerows.

Military roads travel from fort to fort and, by tracing roads, several new fort sites have been identified. Roman forts occur all over Britain (mainly short-lived) but in Wales, northern England and southern Scotland they were more permanent and show as a playing card shape with rounded corners.

'Major stone castles, where they are not in towns, can show up visible remains of surrounding fortifications that are presently unknown'

Marching camps were temporary camps made by Roman armies when on campaign and still show on mountain and moorland areas.

The Dark Ages (400-1066AD) left little to recognise, but the Normans (1066-1200AD) were great energetic builders and have left motte and bailey earthworks and ringworks (fortification without mounds). Most of these are known sites, but there are still a few of the lesser to be located. Interestingly, the major stone castles, where they are not in towns, can show up visible remains of surrounding fortifications that are presently unknown, such as Civil War seige works. Worth a look in evening light.

The Medieval period (1200-1500AD) was the period when most of the landscape finally appeared in the form that we see it now with the exception of hedges, most of which came in the 18th century. When flying, the layout pattern of 'planted towns' (Norman town planning) is readily seen from the air – church, manor house or castle, high street, village green and burgage plots. The latter are long, narrow property boundaries made by leasing land to farmers and traders to encourage ecomonic development.

A common feature covering the landscape are the remnants of ridge and furrow (ploughing method) and strip fields (now with mainly hedges). Moated manor houses show in low-lying ground, mostly abandoned when they went out of fashion during the late 15th century. Roads that have disappeared (green roads), mainly because they were not tarmacadamed in the last century, can be traced heading from village to village or farm to farm.

The post-Medieval times (1500 to Industrial Revolution) show fortifications, mining, canals, remains of grand houses and estates now disappeared. Walled gardens by themselves are a giveaway that there was an important building nearby. The Industrial Revolution has left a landscape of abandoned canals, mines and quarries, railways and ironworks to mention a few.

Commensurate with safety lookout, take a look at the landscape beneath you – you may notice something new.

■ John Sorrell has been flying for 45 years and combines his love of flying with his interest in history and archaeology. He flies a Ventus BT and RF5b from Usk.



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Marjorie Hobby

The university challenge



The doubters said it would never fly, but they were proved wrong. Stu Hoy reports on a university project involving an EA9 Optimist and a number of electric motors



In September, the EA9 Optimist modified with Propulsive Sustainer Modules (PSMs) by students was ready to fly. Pilot Derek Piggott was offered the choice of two or four PSMs for the first (unpowered) flight and chose all eight!

SEVERAL years ago the BGA asked for a volunteer to oversee a project dreamed up by Dr Graham Dorrington of The Queen Mary University of London for his Master of Engineering students. This involved John Edgley's EA9 Optimist and a significant number of electric motors. Having served in the Royal Air Force for 20-odd years I should have known better than to volunteer!

I became involved with John Edgley and the EA9 during the latter stages of the 20th century primarily because at that time I was making water-based adhesives and filler coats for Ceconite fabric. It was thought that cellulose adhesives and dope might damage the Fibrelam structure and so a water-based system would be used when covering the EA9.

I worked with John very much in the background until the aircraft was ready for fabric and then I had the glider to cover and paint. The glider first flew in 1994 and John has kindly kept me involved ever since, only missing one annual inspection prior to the glider being loaned to The Queen Mary University in 2001.

So – back to the volunteer bit – it seemed only right I should continue to look after the glider's wellbeing at the hands of 'students'!

At its inception, Project Orion was born to allow the students to firstly build one of John Edgley's EA9 kits and then to assess the power required to get the glider airborne, design a system of electrically powered motors to do the job, build them and fly the glider.

The Queen Mary University soon realised that Man-hours Required divided by Available Man-hours equalled something like 17 years and so it was at this point that John lent the university his prototype EA9.

In 2001 John Edgley, Derek Piggott (who test flew the EA9) and I went to the first Project Orion presentation where I learned that the idea was to give the glider sufficient electrical power to self-launch. I put the kibosh on this idea to avoid all the costs, paperwork and pitfalls of modifying the glider to become a SLMG. It was agreed that the aim should be a self-sustainer system.

We subsequently visited the laboratory and were shown a basic under-wing pylon mounted on the EA9's wing. (The EA9 was rigged and hanging from the ceiling). The basic concept of the pylon survived several different groups of students (the project stayed 'static' and the students moved on) and was eventually used for flying.

Dr Dorrington doggedly kept the project moving along, even though each new class of students seemed to take a step or two backwards before progressing the project further. We attended presentations held by each class of students during their year in the project. There were also the doubters in the university from the hierarchy to lab assistants who were heard to mutter 'it will never fly' – words of course that just drove Graham to prove them all wrong.

'Having served in the Royal Air Force for 20-odd years I should have known better than to volunteer!'

Last year we – John, my daughter Jo (who has been working with me in Anglia Sailplanes for 18 months now) and I attended the university to see progress and wind tunnel tests of the under-wing pylons; named as Propulsive Sustainer Modules (PSMs).

It was announced that the PSMs would be ready for flight in the near future with one pusher and one puller motor on each PSM and that there would be eight PSMs in total, four under each wing. This meant adding 'only 50kg' to the basic weight of the glider!

The only physical intrusion into the structure of the glider were a few holes drilled into the tertiary structure ahead of the wing's carbon fibre trailing edge to mount a securing bracket for each PSM. The brackets ensured no spanwise movement of the PSMs, which were otherwise only strapped to the wing.

Control of the 16 motors was by a simple radio link from a key fob to a receiver in each of the PSMs such that it was all or nothing. This was a good method of avoiding previously suggested cable runs (using ribbon cable) externally along the wing surface and into a multi-switch unit for the pilot in the cockpit.

For the technically-minded, the electric motors are Graupner 900 BB Torque motors with an 8 amp current drain at maximum efficiency and run at 6,500 rpm. Power for the front and rear motors was provided by Nickel-Metal-Hydride batteries and Lithium Polymer (LiPo) batteries respectively. Each motor was equipped with an 11x8in propeller, giving about 14Nm of static thrust.

The PSMs comprised an aluminium tube to hold the batteries and motors, sidewalls and leading edge (20swg aluminium alloy sheet) housed the avionics and a manually operated master-switch. LEDs in the leading edge indicated whether the avionics was on/off or motors running (the propellers windmill at quite low airspeeds).

The upper edge of each PSM was shaped with foam blocks to fit the wing rib profile at its mounting point. An adjustable 2in strap mounted front and rear on each PSM passed over the wing and was pulled tight to secure each PSM to the wing. None of the PSMs moved in flight.

Collection of the glider from the university went well – traffic in the Mile End Road in London is usually very heavy – our arrival with a Venture trailer slowed things down particularly when a right turn into the university was blocked by a traffic island and to avoid entering the congestion zone we had to negotiate a U-turn – to the annoyance of a ➢

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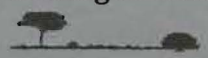
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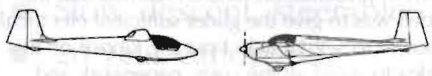


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The flights were successful in that a glider was flown with 16 motors – apparently a world record but for the fact that the glider is a prototype – without any problems. Inset top: the project was worked on by Queen Mary University of London's Master of Engineering students, including Junead and Merhtash pictured here. Inset above: the project under way in the university's lab.

(All photos by Stu Hoy, Anglia Sailplanes)

➢ passing motorcyclist who ignored my signals! The return to Norfolk was uneventful and the glider was deposited in our hangar.

The glider received a thorough going over for an annual inspection. A very detailed loose article check was carried out, removing some rubbish and one very large eye-bolt from the centre-section. None of the usual insurers were prepared to stick their neck out to insure the glider flying with the PSMs and the project nearly floundered.

However, John was successful in finding a new-to-gliding company who would carry the insurance for us. James Moreton of Emery Little Insurance Co Ltd (brokers) found the Albion Insurance Company Ltd to insure the glider. To them we owe a great deal of thanks.

A modification leaflet was written and submitted to the BGA for approval with the students' 123-page report on the project as the background and technical detail. I was duly admonished for my modification application – it was pointed out that hanging 16 motors on a glider was a Major Modification not a Minor Modification! Not withstanding my error of judgment, Howard Torode and Jim Hammerton worked hard on the application and I must thank and commend them for the effort put into considering and approving the modification in such a short timescale.

With the insurance in place and the modification approved we were set to fly the glider from the Norfolk Gliding Club's airfield at Tibenham on 20-21 September 2008. Mick Hughes (club manager and DCFI) flew the glider 'clean' to give it a shakedown flight a couple of days before the test flights as it had not flown since 2000.

John, Graham and one ex-student, Mehrtash Lotfian, arrived on the Friday evening and Derek Piggott Saturday lunchtime. Not only had the Norfolk Gliding Club offered us great hospitality and the airfield but the Gods had blessed us with the good weekend of the year and so PSMs and the EA9 were finally assembled for flight.

Derek – as pilot – was offered the choice of two or four PSMs for the first (unpowered) flight and chose all eight! All PSMs were attached to the EA9 and tested, but two failed to activate, the 9v batteries powering the avionics had failed. With cunning, things were arranged so that three PSMs on each side activated so as to avoid asymmetric power in flight.

'It was pointed out that hanging 16 motors on a glider was a Major Modification not a Minor Modification'

The first flight went very well; Derek considered that the stall speed was increased by about 2kts with very little difference in the handling qualities. No power was applied during the first flight and only for a short time during the second flight because battery power was limited (five minutes) with no chance of recharging them over the weekend.

Evening was upon us and the six of us retired to a local pub for a meal and to discuss (only for a short while) the afternoon's activities. This discussion lasted as long as it took Graham to set up his laptop at the end of the table, load a DVD of *The Blue Max* and turn it on. We had our meal watching the film in which Derek had done perhaps more than his fair share of the flying with his commentary on the flying bits and how it was filmed.

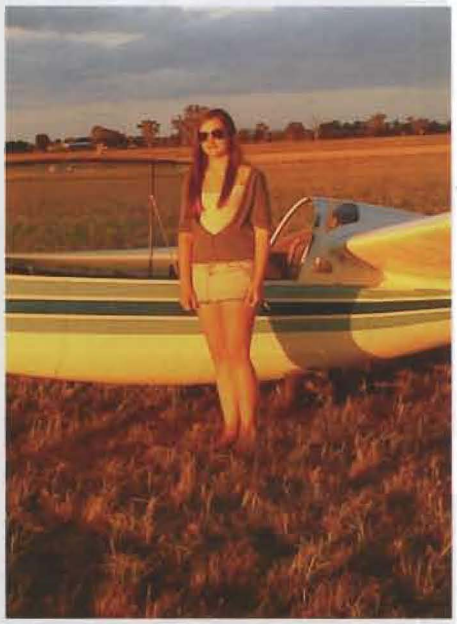
With excellent weather on Sunday and fresh 9v batteries for the control avionics all eight PSMs responded to the key-fob. The glider was aerotowed to 2,000 feet, this time to apply power and in particular Derek was to apply power on rounding out to see if it would self-sustain in ground effect. A good spot landing ensued and on that basis it was generally decided that not a lot happened to extend the glide. Certainly the noise of the motors and propellers could easily be heard – the adage: 'the net result of opening the throttle is more noise' came to mind!

However, the flights were successful in that we flew a glider with 16 motors (apparently a world record but for the fact that the glider is a prototype) without any problems. It has opened a window to show that innovation should be supported and maybe the example will both encourage others with innovative ideas and maybe – possibly – show the CAA that an 'Experimental' category of aircraft is something this country could really do with.

My thanks to the Norfolk Gliding Club for their hospitality; to Dr Dorrington and students of The Queen Mary University of London for coming up with the idea; John Edgley for the loan of his glider to the University and his technical help; Howard and Jim for approving the modification for flight; Derek for his expertise, flying the glider and comments on *The Blue Max;* The Albion Insurance Company Ltd for covering the event and to my daughter for not shouting too loudly during a U-turn in the Mile End Road.

Without these people I would not have had the opportunity to volunteer for this very enjoyable project.









This page, clockwise from top left:

Edale and Kinder Scout from January wave
(Dave Salmon)

*Laura Molly Cooper was sent solo by her father Bruce (CFI **Edensoaring**) at the age of 15. To enable this to happen, Bruce and Molly spent the Christmas Holidays at Benalla Australia. Molly went on to get a Bronze leg and Silver height*
(Bruce Cooper)

*What do you do if you can't get to the club hangar and the trailer doors are frozen? Arrange a lecture in a local village hall. Phil and Diana King gave a talk on wave flying at Hope Bowdler village hall when **Herefordshire** members couldn't get to the club because of snow (Alto)*

*Daisy, **Oxford**'s T-21 takes to the air*
(Paul Morrison)

Opposite page, clockwise from top left:

*Mad people at **Oxford** flying Daisy on 3 January 2009. Temperature on the ground, minus two. Temperature in the air felt a lot less!*
(David Weekes)

***Burn**'s Falke motor glider having just been brought out in on a very cold winter's early morning. It was as cold as it looks!*
(Kevin Moreland)

***Portsmouth Naval**'s Discus 805 enters the winch climb at Lee-on-the-Solent (Neil Shaw)*

***Kent**'s K-21's, taken on 11 January this year*
(Peter Mather)

*Snow launch at **Dunstable** (Andrew Sampson)*

Our thanks to all the photographers and to our Club News *contributors for sending these in. Remember, if you'd like to submit your previously-unpublished photographs for possible inclusion somewhere in* S&G, *do send them to* editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk













■ On 3 January Zakk Hutton (pictured left) flew solo at The Long Mynd the day after his 16th birthday. This achievement is all the more remarkable because Zakk was diagnosed with Leukaemia three years ago. His battle against this was documented in the programme *Children Fighting Cancer* on BBC TV in June 2007.

Specialist treatment halted the advance of the leukaemia but the continuing medication and monthly chemotherapy have badly affected his mobility.

In May 2007 Zakk joined the Midland Gliding Club.

His instructor, Mike Greenwood, said: "Zakk has been an excellent pupil and was a competent pilot in a very short time. He has been ready to fly solo for some time. Frustratingly for him we cannot legally send anyone solo before their 16th birthday. On his actual birthday bad weather stopped all flying, but on Saturday it was clear and calm. After a couple of dual check flights I sent him off on his own. He made two perfect flights to earn his glider pilot's wings."

Thanks are also due to gliding charity The Caroline Trust, which provides financial assistance to young aviators.

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Club news



***Booker**'s best cadet performance award was presented to Mike Gatfield (left) at an awards dinner*



*Bob Cassidy (rear) made a welcome return to **Borders**' instructor team (Rich Abercrombie)*



***Bowland Forest** celebrated its first solo of 2009 with Chris Jones' flight on 3 January*

Banbury (Aquila)
WE held our AGM in November and despite a poor year for flying we had a good year financially. Trophies were awarded to John Gliddings, Club Ladder; Ashley Valentine, Best Progress; Dave Spillett, *Best Ab-Initio*; Ian Broom, most promising pilot; Tim Wheeler, Best Cross Country Flight; Brian Hammond, Eric Robinson Trophy; Ron Sangster, Keith Chicester Award; John Batch, Jim Wright Clubman of the Year Trophy; Neil Kelly. Best Flight of the Year. CofAs of our fleet are well under way, thanks to Ron Sangster, and they will be completed in good time for the start of the season. We wish all our fellow pilots and clubs a very happy and successful gliding year.
Rod Watson

Bath, Wilts and North Dorset (The Park)
THE year started well for us. Through the efforts of John Symonds, we secured an award from the BGA to help us with marketing. The real coup was Dick Yerburgh being awarded the BGA diploma for his contribution to gilding. The award was well deserved, as Dick has been part of the backbone of the club, and his contribution has been immense. Well done Dick, we are all proud. David Surman went solo in the winter months proving that we still glide all weathers. As a bonus, our temperamental ridge has worked on several days this winter. At times, the hangar has been an area of great activity with every available space taken up with fettling of gliders and trailers ready for the new season. Let's hope this year is a good one.
Jan Smith

Bidford (Bidford)
WAVE has continued to be the dominant lift at our site with a 2hr 49min flight from our Puchacz and the K-13 joining it just before Christmas. We have made some significant changes to our fleet recently, and have made our training syllabus much more trainee-friendly. One of our instructors, Frank Jeynes, was so enthused by our new syllabus that it prompted him to write an article for *S&G*, which will appear in an issue soon. We are holding more events here this year, including our stalwart – the Regional Competition, and a Two-Seater Challenge Cup. For more details check out our website *www.bidfordgliding.co.uk*. As usual the NPPL continues to be popular, so much so that we hope to keep a second motor glider busy as well.
Lynne Burkert

Black Mountains (Talgarth)
AFTER a poor summer in 2008, we have been having a great autumn and winter season with lots of super east wave and more flights to over 10,000ft than we can remember for a long time. The number of winter visitors continues to grow, so come and join them and pick up your height badges and get rid of those winter blues. Several dedicated club members have been hard at work putting the finishing touches to the new briefing/training room and workshop/store as well as creating a new hard standing for trailers – it is amazing how tasks like these bring out the real club spirit!
Robbie Robertson

Booker (Wycombe Air Park)
THE snow is thawing after one of the longest wintery periods for 20 years; but we still have more first solos; namely Craig Cairns and Simon Halfpenny, whilst John Hooper and Mark Wolff have converted to the K-18 and Suresh Nahar to the Junior. We held our awards dinner which Dennis Campbell organized and made the presentations, including one to himself for fastest 500km and longest flight to CFI Mike Collett (566km). Mike is in the British team competing in the Junior Worlds this summer in Finland; good luck. Best cadet performance went to Mike Gatfield. Bob Davey has been training the first of this year's new tuggies Raphael Au, originally from Hong Kong. Our summer schedule of activities starts with the Easter Egg Aerobatic competition on Saturday 11 April and our Regionals this year are from 11-19 July. We are also planning more of our successful "Get your Solo" weeks, Bronze and Silver courses and a couple of task weeks.
Roger Neal

Borders (Milfield)
WET weather has put pay to a few weekends flying, however where we have flown, the conditions have produced some fantastic soaring. Barry Lytollis (LS4) climbed to 10,500ft in the Milfield wave to claim his Silver height, Andy Bardgett (LS4), reached 14,000ft and Mal Parkes (Pik 20b) 12,000ft. Congratulations to John Brown who was sent solo in December. Another well done to Graham Mitcheson and Helen Fraser who have completed their BI instructor courses. Helen is well on course to be Borders's first lady instructor. We would also like to welcome back Bob Cassidy to the instructor team. Bob endured a mammoth wave flight during his revalidation with RE Colin Sword, recovering from spins higher than their entry. Borders would like to thank Northumbria Gliding Club (Currock Hill) for the loan of their Puchacz. Our Grob ACRO III has now had its strengthening modifications completed and is back with us. Without Currock's help we couldn't have run the BI, Ass Cat completion, and revalidation courses.
Rich Abercrombie

Bowland Forest (Chipping)
GLOBAL warming has meant minus C figures and continued flying with a first solo just two days after New Year's Day; congratulations go to Chris Jones. Bronze course lectures are now in full swing and being presented to various members by a willingly press-ganged bunch of instructors. We have acquired a Jeans Astir which seems to be been favourably received judging by the amount of times it's been in the air and plans are afoot to get another glass two-seat trainer. We have also just placed an order for the Skylaunch Winch Assistance system for four of our club gliders. This should improve launch heights as well as increasing safety. Finally, our thanks go to Ian Ashton for all his hard work over the past four years as DCFI. He is succeeded by me.
Phil Punt

Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield)
OUR new chairman after the AGM is Colin McEwen. Andy Davis (vice-chairman) and Phil Lee (secretary) were re-elected and John Morriss is now treasurer. Eight members stood for committee and the "lucky" six elected are Mike Jordy, Andy Townsend, Alan Price, Kevin Neave, Rob Hanks and Jeremy Mitcheson. There are plans for a budget surplus, despite the recession. Subs were increased three per cent, but members renewing before the April deadline will pay last year's rates. Thursday evening parties continued to do good work around the place and enjoy various cuisines afterwards. Work was done on the peri-track and the winch track. The adopt-a-club-glider teams swung into action at CofA time. Well done to Kevin Neave and Hywel Moss on achieving Full Cat rating; also David Brown on his first solo.
Bernard Smyth

Buckminster Gliding Club
THE Saltby Leg of the Inter-clubs is being held on 16-17 May and the following (Bank Holiday) weekend, the 23/24/25 will be the 5th Wood and Glass competition. From 16-25 May we will also be running a task week, which will mean that tugs will be available, weather briefings will be given and tasks will be set. Everyone and anyone can come and fly (so long as our new CFI John Sentence is happy) and the two-seaters will be available. Retrieves will not be a problem as everyone will be there to lend a hand. Visiting pilots are welcome. For the first weekend, priority for launches will be given to the Inter-club teams. For the last weekend, we will run the usual W&G fun competition with a BBQ on the Saturday night. More details to come, but please email the club if you think you will be entering the W&G and/or flying in any or all of the task week.
Chris Hayball

Please send news to *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk* or to Susan Newby, BGA, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE **to arrive by 10 April** for the next issue (later deadlines at *www.gliding.co.uk*)

Club news

Burn (Burn)
CONGRATULATIONS to Tommy Lynch on his first solo flight. We held our annual party and awards ceremony. Our thanks to Debbie Bell and Eileen Peters for all their work in making it a success. Awards were presented to Alastair Mackenzie for Best Flight, Matt Ellis for Furthest Flight in a Club Glider and to Andrew Kitchen for Most Improved Pilot; for the first time in many years no one made a significant gain in height to justify an award. It is with great regret that we report the death of Fred Smith, a long-time glider pilot and beekeeper. Both Fred and his honey will be sorely missed (obit p63).
George Goodenough



*Tony Flannery congratulating Tommy Lynch on his solo in **Burn**'s K-13* *(Kevin Moreland)*

Cairngorm (Feshiebridge)
FLYING has continued through the winter and between the snowstorms. Our celebrated Mayfest will run from 2-17 May. Bookings have been coming in fast and furious so best to book ASAP with Chris at chris@capercaillie.flyer.co.uk. In addition, our Octoberfest will run from 26 Sept-11 Oct. At the time of writing we have spaces for both weeks at present however these do book up quickly so do book as above asap. We look forward to seeing you at Feshie, the friendly club.
Chris Fiorentini

Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)
CAMBRIDGE GC is planning a very full calendar this season. There are 'Discover Gliding' Friday afternoons, five-day gliding courses, regular cross-country courses and an advanced cross-country course with Sarah Kelman. There is huge interest in our Vintage and wooden Glider Rally (last week of May) and our ever-popular regionals (22 August) continue to attract a large following. With evening lectures during the winter and a range of events during the season, there is something for every pilot. Visitors are always welcome, all info on our website. Maintenance work continues apace on our fleet of gliders, tugs, motor glider and our two winches.
Derek Coppin

Carlton Moor (Carlton Moor)
THIS will be the last club report from Carlton Moor. We recently held our 78th Annual General Meeting and decided that we could no longer continue to operate. This was primarily due to lack of membership, but the deteriorating condition of the airfield and spiralling costs and European interference all added up to make it impossible for the small band remaining to continue. The site will be cleared and the heather will gradually take over the hilltop, leaving everyone to wonder how it was ever possible to fly from this most difficult airfield in Britain.
Nigel Ling

Chilterns (RAF Halton)
CONGRATULATIONS to 'Taff' Williams and Dylan Trinder on completing their SLMG NPPLs and fellow NPPL student Martin Benson now solo in the Grob 109, as Nige Smith has been kept busy with the associated exams. All in all though, we had a quiet winter with the airfield closed for quite a time in January and February due to water logging and, on occasion, snow. However, Paul and Gally enjoyed themselves at Al Ain in the UAE while supporting four air shows with Papa Juliet (see p24). Back at home though, our Astir, R9, is finally beyond economic repair due to its age and the associated fair wear and tear.
Andrew Hyslop

Clevelands (RAF Dishforth)
THE weather over Christmas and New Year left something to be desired, but January provided some good soaring, with the usual westerly wave (and indeed some northerly wave in February) making a welcome appearance. A few members even found time to indulge in some aerobatics when the wind wasn't blowing. Congratulations to Steve Penfold for soloing in the K-21 and rapid conversion to the K-18. We also welcome several new members who are keenly progressing through the training card and hopefully won't be too far away from solo themselves. Everyone at Clevelands is looking forward to a prosperous spring and clocking up plenty of hours and kilometres.
Matt Woodhouse

Cotswold (Aston Down)
MID-January finds us gathered for the club dinner-dance where silverware and assorted prizes are handed to the most meritorious members. Impossible to name all, but brothers Sam and Max Lazenby jointly won the prize for best junior for their hard work and good flying. Thanks to Richard Kill for organising the evening. At the AGM our Treasurer gave a detailed report and we have had a successful year despite fewer launches caused by the wet summer. Our newly-elected Chairman, Chris Swann, takes over from Mike Weston while we welcome Sarah Zanoni as Deputy Chairman. Mike received a vote of thanks from members for all his hard work. The airfield was buried under a foot of snow during the February cold spell but our tarmac runways clear quickly. Let's all wish for super weather for the 15m nationals.
Frank Birlison

Crusaders (Kingsfield, Cyprus)
IT finally feels like winter, we are on the airfield with jumpers and jackets! We had our Christmas party at the Marina and opened the airfield on 1 January for flour bombing. This period saw the loss of two much needed female members – Sveta Petko has returned to Russia and Genette Hawkins has returned to the UK for hubby Steve's last military posting. We have had long days being able to open from early and reasonable weather so a few longs flights have been achieved. Last week we had a visit from Bob and Patience Scott-Douglas who were members of old. Bob first visited the island in 1953 and is still carrying his log book with him at the grand age of 92. It was fantastic to share stories with them both.
Jo Rigby

Darlton (Darlton)
FLYING was restricted during the start of the year due to waterlogged runways. However, some achievements can be recorded with Mike Saunders going solo in a K-13 after an extended preparation period – congratulations to Mike. Another first from one of our intrepid lady members took place with Amy Sentence going solo in the motor glider, to her obvious delight in the staged photograph below. Thanks to Amy for lots of celebratory drinks. Work has now started in earnest on the foundations of our second hangar and the plans for a permanent clubhouse are well advanced. With the better weather just around the corner, Darlton will see a frenzy of building and flying from the site from our enthusiastic membership.
Geoff Homan

Dartmoor (Brentor)
THE closing stages of 2008 brought about a flurry of first and re-solos which bodes well for a promising and competitive club flying year in 2009. Our photo shows Phil Hardwick (Phil the Farmer), who went solo on Wednesday 9 January, pictured with our Senior Instructor, Bob Pirie. Other solos/re-solo include: Will Willson – one of Bob's old students from Eaglescott; Andrew Beaumont, Roger and Barry Green (father and son team who first soloed elsewhere and have now brought a second Astir to the site), and Alan Ballard. In the face of the current economic gloom our finances are holding up, despite our having just missed the launch target of 2,500 launches for 2008 (thanks to the poor summer). We look forward to reporting the decisions of our AGM in the next issue.
Martin Cropper



***Darlton** celebrates another first as Amy Sentence goes solo in the club's motor glider*



*Phil Hardwick is congratulated on his January solo by **Dartmoor**'s Senior Instructor, Bob Pirie*



***Herefordshire**'s Nigel Snee in the Blanik, clearly delighted after his first solo* *(Phil King)*

Deeside (Aboyne)
CONGRATULATIONS to Roy Wilson for winning the National Ladder (Open Ladder – Enigma Trophy). Congratulations also go to Mark McCrum, who went soaring in January and gained his first Bronze leg (was this the first Bronze leg of the 2009?) He would have gained his Silver height too, had he remembered to take a barograph. From May, Deeside will have an instructor and tug pilot available seven days a week. Until then mid-week flying will be available by private arrangement or through the online Wannafly system *www.deesideglidingclub.co.uk*
James Addison

Derby & Lancs (Camphill)
AROUND 30 members enjoyed Christmas Dinner at Camphill, and the latest edition of *Camphill News* can be downloaded from our website. In spite of everything the weather and the credit crunch threw at us, we made a (very) small profit last year. The launchpoint bus is being connected to the office via a WiFi link. In view of all the airspace restrictions around us, we are planning an RT course early this year. We were all sorry to hear of the death in January of our President Bill Hughes, an obituary appears on p64. We have had a number of ridge and wave soaring days in December and January, nothing spectacular regarding heights but they have given spectacular views of the Peak District, with the higher parts being covered in snow.
Dave Salmon

Devon & Somerset (North Hill)
DESPITE misting and icy canopies, the first flight of the year went to Simon Leeson and Andrew Logan. However, we have had some great ridge and wave days. Congratulations to Joao Leitao, who went solo in October. Well done to all those who received awards at our AGM, including best two-seater flight to Simon Leeson and Henry Ford. Best height gain to Matt Wright, longest cross-country to Dave Reilly, best progress to Peter Smith, best performance in a BGA competition to Peter Field and best flight in a wooden glider to Richard Barden. The Wily Old Bird trophy was awarded to Mike Fitzgerald. Andrew Mugleston has been welcomed on to the committee. Preparations are now under way for our trip to Portmoak and thanks go to all who are helping to organise this. One of our K-21s has just been sent to Poland to be re-coated, so we are looking forward to seeing it back all spruced up with a new lease of life.
Cheryl Smith

Dorset (Eyres Field)
WE welcome new trainee Andrew MacGillivray to the club, and hope to see some more this year. Congratulations to Paul Hale for converting to the Astir, and completing a two-hour flight towards his cross-country endorsement. For gliding in Dorset please go to *www.dorsetglidingclub.co.uk*. Our catering 'manager'/odd-job Guru Gary Shaw had a minor stroke in November, and thankfully is now recovered enough to be able to visit. Our thanks to Jim Hanney for taking over catering while Gary has been incapacitated. Mike Slade and Nick Sarel had some good flying in Omarama in early December, with Nick achieving 560km on a record-breaking two-seater Mountain Soaring Course flight. His time in the air was eight hours and nine minutes, and his max altitude was above 20,000ft. We were saddened to hear of the passing away of Harry Wolf in early October. A very long-serving member of the club, Harry was always a character, and a good friend to many people, and will be remembered with affection.
Colin Weyman



***The Mynd**'s CFI has a new toy – the Pitts* *(Alto)*

Essex (North Weald)
OUR AGM on 1 February coincided with the heaviest snowfall that Essex has seen for years but many managed to make it. Steve Rhenius has taken over from Martin Jewell as Flying Accounts Manager. We wish Steve all the best and thank Martin for all the work he has done. Happily Martin will still be available to give help when needed. Congratulations to Paul Bott on being presented with the Essex Gliding Club Merit Cup for the tremendous amount of work he undertook in his first year as Technical Officer, especially in relation to the registration of all the club's gliders. Well done also to Vee Harrington on being awarded the CFI's Cup for the best flying progress. Members are enjoying their winter flying at Wattisham, with Tom Fowles and Steve Rhenius converting to the Anglia Junior with Vince Earl and Dave Hertzberg flying it for the first time. They are now eyeing up the Discus.
Peter Perry

Essex & Suffolk (Wormingford)
ONCE again the weather stopped much of the planned activity at Ringmer. However, ESGC soloed no fewer then six pilots during the period 17 December to 24 January. Congratulations go in chronological order to Dave Wallis, Mark Hardie, Dave Davis, Nathan Tardif, Paul Cavill (first first solo of 2009 at ESGC), and Dave Bolsdon. A few hardy souls managed to get our K-21 to Parham where they played in some weak wave for a while, but, in the main, the fleet has struggled due to a waterlogged field. On a more positive note, a series of winter lectures is under way and several new instructors are ready to start training. The new hedging around the field is almost complete – one last push in February will see it finished in time for the new season. As well as significant work on winch refurbishments we have upgraded the control cabin and the radio links.
Jim Izzard and Bob Godden

Fenland (RAF Marham)
WELCOME to new club member Chris Tansy. We wish Terry Parnell and Timmy Edmunds a full recovery from their recent and ongoing illnesses. Paul our CFI is off to Chile. Adrian is in America, JDD is in Denver skiing, Sid Wright is hard at it with his rating. All going well with the trip to the Long Mynd.
Natalie Day

Herefordshire (Shobdon)
CONGRATULATIONS to Nigel Snee on his first solo. Nigel had his first flight in a glider 35 years ago before the commitments of work and family intervened – perseverance pays off eventually. A good crowd enjoyed a valuable and entertaining talk by Rose Johnson on competition flying and improving cross-country techniques. Several members have already been heard discussing where to go to fly their first comp. The refurbished workshop is up and running thanks to many members who helped to clear it out and in particular to Ken Martin for acquiring suitable shelves and racks for storage.
Diana King

Highland (Easterton)
YOU may still be in time to join us at Easterton for the Spring Mountain Soaring Championships. The event will take place from 5-11 April 2009 and is limited to a maximum of 20 entries. The Duo Discus is in Poland for refurbishment, but should be back all shiny and better than ever by the time you read this. The board are considering rationalising our club fleet which, across both clubs (Highland and Fulmar), consists of three single-seaters, two dual-seaters, a motor glider, a tug and two winches. It is likely that the Junior will be sold at some point this year. Congratulations to Rich Thornton, who managed to get his two-hour endurance flight on Saturday 3 January and to Jim Fordham, who re-soloed on 24 January. In January, Angus Robertson, our local MP, visited Easterton and had a flight with Robert Tait, our chairman.
John Thomson

Kestrel (RAF Odiham)
JANUARY was a bad month for the club with the loss of the hangar – health and safety finally caught up with our aging Bessonneau hangar with concerns over its structural integrity. Funny thing was it still managed to stay standing during all the snow and ice. A massive effort by the club members over one very cold weekend saw all the club's assets relocated to various locations around the airfield, and thanks go to 618 VGS and the Station for allowing us to keep the larger assets under cover, so while we are not so centrally located the club has managed to continue to operate.
Neil Armstrong

Lakes (Walney)
ANOTHER busy couple of months, thanks to all those members who have worked hard to get CofAs and annual checks completed, in particular Jan for his determined effort with the K-21 and the tugmaster and team. The winter wave continues with time left only for cat and mouse games in the bus. A video can be seen on *YouTube* by typing in Gliding at Walney. See for yourself what towing out to sea looks like and steady wave forming over Black Coombe.
Kate Frost

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Club news



*Congratulations to Tony Smith, who has gone solo at **Mendip***



*Father and daughter Garry and Emma Cuthill before flying in Daisy, the **Oxford** T-21 (Paul Smith)*



*Wave over the Usk valley taken by **South Wales'** Simon France in his Mosquito*

Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)
WE have a new manager as Richard Moyse (our former chairman) has taken over from Alastair Mackinnon, who has moved on to Halfpenny Green Airport. New Year's Day 2009 was marked by a fun run round the peri-track (2.8miles). Twenty-six brave souls managed to appear after the previous night's festivities; about half ran whilst the remainder walked. Our winner did the distance in 21 minutes. We raised over £200 for Dogs for the Disabled charity. There was a real feel-good factor in the clubhouse afterwards and we had no doubt struck a good relationship with the locals who had joined our first (and hopefully annual) NYD fun run. Other clubs might consider doing something like this on New Year's Day. It is a good time for PR, the Christmas spirit is still working and not everyone wants to go to the sales!
Marjorie Hobby

London (Dunstable)
WINTER continued with good ridge and occasional local wave. We were not put off by the February snow and we still managed to fly. Launching in the snow is an experience not to be missed! The clubhouse renovation project continues with replacement of the electrical services, and a welcome redesign of the toilet and shower facilities. Over Easter we had expeditions to Shobdon and Cerdanya. The Dan Smith aerobatics competition is scheduled for 28-29 March. Our aerobatics competition for club members – the Algek Cup – takes place on 6-7 June. Our cross-country Task Week is planned for 27 June - 5 July, the regionals from 25 July - 2 August, and we are hosting the Junior Nationals in the last week of August. Meanwhile Mark Davis has taken over as Inter-club League captain and is developing a group of novices – we're looking forward to exploring the fields of the East Midlands league.
Andrew Sampson

Mendip (Halesland)
CONGRATULATIONS to Tony Smith, who has now gone solo. Congratulations to Andy Whiteman, who passed his Ass Cat completion course and is now a fully paid-up member of the Halesland instructor team. Andy put his new skills into practice on his first Solo duty by correctly identifying it was going to be a good ridge day and restricted flights to 30 minutes. His first flight resulted in a K-13 landout at the bottom of the hill. We had a very successful winter expedition spread over two weekends to Talgarth. Thank you to the Black Mountains Gliding Club for your hospitality.
Terry Hatton

Midland (Long Mynd)
SOME stunning winter conditions have provided excellent flying opportunities on The Mynd recently, even if the very low temperatures caused extra challenges for those maintaining our water supplies. Sunday 18 January gave us blue skies, a beautiful snow-covered Mynd and wave, with Mike Witton reaching 7,500 QNH. Much to everyone's delight, Zakk Hutton was sent solo on 3 January, the day after his 16th birthday. Zakk, who joined us in 2007, has been bravely fighting leukaemia for the last three years (see page 53). Our course season starts on 16 March; meanwhile, the series of winter lectures on Saturday evenings has proved very popular. We are expecting this to be a busy year as we celebrate our 75th anniversary. The first two events are our annual Dinner and Dance on 28 March and then we have a Hangar Dance on 30 May. Everyone is welcome, come and join us!
Steven Gunn-Russell

Nene Valley (Upwood)
OUR January shutdown has been very busy and productive. All of the NVGC fleet are now back on-line and ready for the coming season. Many thanks and well done to everyone who pitched in. Our annual dinner and awards ceremony saw the following NVGC members recognised: Richard Hayden received the Chairman's award, Chris Hill the CFI's award, John Bennett the Rose Bowl award, Steve Jarvis won the 'Clutching hands' award, Ron Sibley, the K-7 Wingtip award and this year the coveted 'Life's a sh*t' toilet seat award went to our chairman, Philip Alexander, congratulations to all. Also, many congratulations go to Alex Clarke for achieving his Bronze against the odds and some pretty terrible weather, so it's the Silver this year then Alex?! I would also like to welcome John White to the NVGC Committee as our new club treasurer. Our previous treasurer is still to be found curled up in a corner of the clubhouse, thumb in mouth rocking back and forth.
Kerry Mertz

Norfolk (Tibenham)
WITH the poor weather and the economic climate we have seen a decrease in aerotowing but a marked increase in winch launching with annual checks and motor glider training proceeding apace. Expeditions to Talgarth and Sutton Bank are being planned for the spring and we are looking forward to the club's 50th anniversary celebrations over the midsummer weekend. The club was very disappointed that the 20-metre competition was cancelled as this leaves us without a national competition for the first time for some years. The Eastern Regionals will now be held here from 23-31 May. We have however been cheered by the news that we will be hosting the International Vintage Glider Rally in 2010.
Mike Bean

North Wales (Llantysilio)
ANOTHER Christmas dinner was much enjoyed by members and guests alike. The tail end of the year gave us some memorable wave flying as did the beginning of 2009. This allowed members to escape from our 4,500ft airway ceiling and explore the area of no restriction lying a few miles to the west of our site, which is not always an option in the winter. During the weekend 24-25 January, Carl Pierce – a member who came very late to gliding – contacted wave and managed to achieve his B badge, which may not seem a big deal to Gold and Diamond readers but gave Carl and our club's members a warm glow on a very cold day. Well done, Carl. On Saturday 7 February a few hardy members turned up at the airfield only to find snow drifts of three feet or more, while all very pretty on the ground did nothing for our aerial photography, roll on spring.
Brian Williams

Oxford (Weston)
AT an exciting AGM full of fun incidents and mini-prizes, new committee members Jon Christensen and Paul Smith were elected. Paul is taking over as club secretary, thanks to Nick Hill who has performed the job so well. CFI Howard Stone presented prizes to the deserving few, and this year I got a special idiot award for getting my finger jammed in the instrument panel midway along the downwind leg! Chairman Paul Morrison kept us all informed on the Eco Town which is still very real threat to our future. Neil Turner and Andrew Butterfield spent a couple of days rebuilding the engine in 'Taffy', our spare winch, ready for use in the summer. Thanks to them. The CofA team are busy and didn't seem to get any break at all before starting with this year's work. Tuesday night helpers will always be welcome. And finally the T-21 Daisy enthusiasts flew her on 3 January in the biting cold. Daft blighters.
Neil Swinton

Peterborough & Spalding (Crowland)
OUR hangar floor fund is well on track, with the weekly raffle of a free aerotow, contributing to a large proportion of the funds. Despite the weather, flying has continued throughout the winter, mainly due to the wise investment of having drainage channels dug into our airfield. Club membership has fared very well this year, with new would-be glider pilots outnumbering those who have disappeared. Expeditions are booked for both Milfield and Aboyne. Our club's two summer flying weeks will be 23-31 May and 24-30 August. Visitors from other BGA affiliated clubs are welcome, but for the weekdays we require any visiting pilots to hold the minimum of a Silver C. We are planning another Open Day to be held on Sunday 21 June.
Merv Bull

Portsmouth Naval (Lee on Solent)
HAVING an airfield by the sea, in the very south of the country, means the weather tends to be milder and conditions less extreme, however whilst we have kept flying throughout the winter, it has been cold,



Looking down over the South Downs from an Open Cirrus flying out of ***South Downs*** *Gliding Club at Parham (Graham Smith)*



Nothing flying in the ***Vale of the White Horse*** *but the crows. Despite the snow, a flurry of new members has kept the club busy (Jay Myrdal)*

windy, and wet at times. Nevertheless, we have continued trial flights, recruited new members, started annual check-flights on all, and pleasingly saw first soloes in early-January for Simon Gutman and John Travell. Congratulations to both. Our fleet is being maintained well, and is now almost all operational again thanks to Geoff Clark. We await the return of our club motor glider from a star-annual at Halton. Airfield operations are stable alongside GA, and the chairman and committee are progressing long-term solutions for hangarage, clubhouse and tenancy. Preparations are under way for our Easter eight-day Navy course, along with other expeditions and competitions, whilst the rest of us look forward to the forthcoming season.
Neil Shaw

Scottish Gliding Union (Portmoak)
THE signage at the entrance to the site has been completely re-designed and the clubhouse entrance lobby has received a facelift too – thanks to Vic Leitch, Scott Hardie and Gerry Marshall. Those of us participating in the R/T Licence exams are in the final stages and hopefully we'll be reporting our progress in the next issue. Our Walking on Air (WOA) group arranged an illustrated talk by Polly Vacher at Strathclyde University. Polly delighted the audience with tales from her solo round the world flight in a single-engine Piper Dakota and a number of excellent items were auctioned to raise more than £1,000 for WOA. Despite the poor weather, our members continue to achieve their goals: Dave Rampton – Silver height, then Gold height; Carl Peters – Radio Licence and Ass Cat instructor rating; Ian Norman – Full Cat instructor rating; Ed Murphy – NPPL.
Ian Easson

Shenington (Edgehill)
IT'S been a busy winter as, in addition to the regular weekend flying, some dedicated members have also managed to keep our mid-week gliding activities going as weather allowed. We have also had some excellent evening dinners prepared by our team of volunteer gourmet chefs led by Sylvia.
Congratulations to Jon Donovan on attaining his Assistant Instructor rating, Lee Ingram gaining his Full Cat. Also to Gavin Preuss, Paul Fletcher and Jon Woodforth on becoming Basic Instructors. We had a very successful day at Leamington Christmas Market where we took along the club's Astir and managed to sell a large number of trial lesson vouchers and courses. Plans are well under way for the Shenington Regionals in July. We also have a number of non-flying activities to keep everyone entertained throughout the event. Our full-time instructors and winch driver are due to begin the new season in March. Please contact the club if you wish to spend a week with us.
Bob Winters

Southdown (Parham)
RIDGE-flying was in short supply this winter but some excellent wave soaring at 3,500ft helped to maintain morale. Jason Heath, Steve Morgan and Luke Taylor went solo, and David Rhys-Jones took time out from his New Zealand safari, to gain a Diamond height at Omarama. A very large party is planned for sometime in July since the club has much to celebrate. Firstly, we will commemorate the first soaring flight at Amberley Mount achieved by E Gordon-England in 1909 (see feature p43); secondly, the purchase of our airfield here at Parham. The club has long sought a permanent home, and it is fitting that it has been finally settled on the anniversary of that epic flight a century ago.
Peter J Holloway

South Wales (Usk)
A RESPECTABLE level of air activity has occurred over the past couple of months, with some notable visitors. For example Mike Fox's visit to Usk coincided with flying in north westerly wave in our Grob Acro, with Rod Weaver reaching heights of 10,000ft. As one correspondent reported on our forum "much better than Christmas shopping". Also as a late Christmas present a number of our members enjoyed three days of uninterrupted easterly wave and ridge flying. Due to the colder or dryer winter, training and winch launching has been largely uninterrupted. As a result of this we can congratulate Rob Coulson for going solo and converting to the K-8, on the same day. At the AGM Ken Counsel was awarded life-time membership as he was to retire from instructing at the end of 2008. As well as instructing Ken has held many other positions of office within the club over his many years of membership.
George Robertson

Stratford on Avon (Snitterfield)
THE wintery conditions have curtailed some of our flying but whenever the opportunity presented itself hardy SoAGC aviators braved the sub-zero conditions and took to the skies. Thanks to Steve Pearce for coordinating the opening of the club on what are 'not normal' flying days. It's been a good while since the area experienced snowfalls like we saw in February so for many pilots, looking down on the snow-covered countryside was an experience. Some extremely brave individuals savoured such delights from the cockpit of a T-21. The launchpoint appeared to be unusually well manned in the severe conditions, but it actually turned out to be a family of snowmen in fluorescent jackets. Club officials attended the two recent BGA conferences and brought back enough to fill the agenda of our annual Spring Meeting. It is pleasing to note that this was the first official club meeting to grace the new clubhouse.
Richard Maksymowicz

Suffolk (Rougham)
WE now have a fully serviceable tug of our own to use with refurbished engine and UK CofA. Thanks to Rattlesden GC for sending over their tug to keep us flying last season. We aim to fly when it is soarable, including midweek. Visiting pilots are welcome anytime and can contact us via *www.suffolksoaring.co.uk*
Richard Maison Pierre

Trent Valley (Kirton in Lindsey)
AFTER some months of discussion, we have concluded a new lease agreement with the Defence Estates that should keep us flying from our patch of grass at Kirton for another 12 years. This will enable us to plan our business development on a much more secure and long-term footing. But first of all we have to find a way of paying the vastly increased rent. CFI Paul Holland's instructor development programme continues apace, with monthly coaching sessions, lectures and briefings. Colin Metcalfe, Bob Kmita and Simon Grant are looking to upgrade to Full Cat whilst BIs Carl Hutson, Dave Bieniasz and myself are aiming to become Ass Cats this season. We currently have far more instructors under training than we have *ab-initios*.
Alan Spencer

Ulster (Bellarena)
NOT a lot of flying at Ulster this winter. If this being the coldest winter in 20 years isn't bad enough, it then goes and rains or blows hard enough to prevent us flying every weekend. The club held the AGM at Carrickfergus town hall in early 09, a few new faces in the committee this year. The new chairman is Jeremy Bryson, new secretary Brian Brannigan, new director Finbarr Cochrane and last, but not least, site officer Gary McLaughlin. Hopefully by my next report in a few months we will have had quite a few hours flying.
Owen Anderson

Vale of the White Horse (Sandhill Farm)
DESPITE the snow, a flurry of new members has meant we have not been idle. Among the recruits is our youngest member, 17-year-old Ed Gibney, who comes to us with the help of a bursary from the Caroline Trust. I take pleasure in announcing a repeat of our very successful hog roast and hangar party scheduled for late July. This will also mark the 50th anniversary of the club. The main event will take place on Saturday 25 July with gliding during the day and festivities in the evening. Most people are expected to camp overnight and be ready, after a bit of coffee, and a sobriety test, to re-commence flying on Sunday morning. Last year proved that if the weather is poor it will be a great weekend. See *www.swindongliding.co.uk* for tickets and fly-in details. From April we will be flying on Fridays and we will be fully operational for the first 10 days in May.
Jay Myrdal

Club news

Wolds (Pocklington)
THE flying year started well with good attendance at Bronze C & RT courses, followed by some socialising in the bar. New solo pilots Paul Docherty, Rodger Murray and Julian Berks have all been celebrating, along with Tony Kendall, who soloed in our SLMG in January. Congratulations to Charlie Tagg, who is in the British Team going to the Junior Worlds in Finland, and to Simon Barker, who has been invited to be the Junior Team Captain. The club's pilot swaps with York Gliding Centre have gone very well, making new friends and contacts, and giving new experiences to pilots from both clubs. We look forward to welcoming pilots for the Club Class Nationals 11-19 July, the Inter-University Task Week at Wolds from 1-9 August, and our annual Two-Seater Comp from 23-30 August.
Avelyn Dell

Wrekin (RAF Cosford)
THIS year's AGM was well attended; Dennis Maddocks' summary of the year's flying confirmed that flying hours were a vast improvement on the previous year, especially those of instruction. Transition to the new EASA CofA paperwork has been smoothly handled, the tug is currently away for engine mount maintenance, the K-13 will hopefully be back with us soon and the rest of the fleet is in good order. So far this year, flying conditions have been cold but conducive to training and we seem to be well placed to take advantage, should soaring days appear – we can but hope. We hope to return soon to flying two-day-flying weekends subject to instructor availability, which will allow us room for a little expansion. Members may be interested in the end-of-August soaring week, let's hope that this year, soaring conditions will appear. For information see the website at *www.wrekinglidingclub.co.uk*
John Vincent

Wyvern (Upavon)
FOLLOWING our loss of hangar use, and despite the arctic conditions, we are still managing to fly by operating gliders from their trailers or a covered and staked-out position on the airfield. At least we can say it is appropriate training for competitions and cross-country retrievals. Adapting to the new circumstances has been a baptism of fire for Cdr Paul Jessop, who succeeded Col Jamie Sage as chairman at the AGM in December. Nevertheless an ambitious programme of *ab-initio* courses, national, regional and Inter-club League competitions and expeditions have been arranged for the coming season. John Hull, our safety officer and aircraft technical member, has been kept busy ensuring the new ways of operating do not have any safety consequences or led to increased damage to gliders. Congratulations to Alec Watt, Danny Carter and Pete Yeo, all Army members who have worked throughout the winter to complete their Basic Instructor training and have since taken their first pupils.
Andy Gibson



Darren Clare (centre), pictured here with John Marsh and David Bradley, was ***Yorkshire****'s first solo of the year (Michelle Clare)*

York (Rufforth)
WE have a new CFI. He is Mark Boyle, a Full Cat with three Diamonds, who has been with the club for more than 20 years. He held a similar post during his career with the RAF and replaces Richard Kalin, well known as a BGA competition pilot, who has had to curtail his visits due to commitments as an airline pilot. A scheme of visits to other clubs has started, with an exchange trip to nearby Pocklington for members to broaden horizons and gain experience of different modes of operation. Involved were instructors, solo pilots and novices, who picked up some useful ideas. The scheme has been warmly welcomed by all involved. We now have a thriving 'Wrinklies Club' – members who are retired but enjoy their Wednesday visits. Some are too old to fly solo but enjoy the experience with a safety pilot – also very useful if there is the chance of a good cross-country flight!
Christopher Brayne

Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)
THIS YEAR sees the YGC celebrating its 75th year and it has a new leader. Andy Parish is promoted to CFI, congratulations Andy, a big thank you to Richard Cole, who is stepping down to the role of DCFI. Congratulations also go to our first solo of the year, Darren Clare. Our Christmas party was a great success, made even more so by the very generous donation of raffle prizes by Hill Aviation Insurance. Thank you, Steve Hill. The miserable weather early in the year saw the enviable migration of members to the antipodes, Bill Payton, Phil Lazenby, John Marsh, to name but a few. Fortunately we don't all have to travel to the other side of the world to enjoy our flying. With our two-seat simulator, we can choose not only where we fly but the weather too – 10kt thermals and a cloudbase to match! Our DCFI is currently giving cloud-flying instruction – very useful for those wave day let-downs. Come and give it a try.
John Marsh

S&G's thanks as always to Debb Evans for editing this issue's **Club News** *– Susan Newby, Editor.*

A fun introduction to competition flying

IT'S THAT time of year again and the Inter-club Leagues are being planned, *writes Julian Bane*. There are a few changes, firstly Colin Cownden has decided to move on after many years hard work and a phenomenal final season last year, passing the task on to me. I would like to thank Colin for all his hard work over the past years and the excellent brief he has given me for the years ahead.

For those of you who don't know, the Inter-club Leagues are intended to encourage competitive cross-country flying on a much less formal basis than National and Regional competitions, involving pilots at all levels of cross-country competence. Special emphasis is placed on the performance of Novice pilots in an effort to encourage cross-county competition and often the spirit of a rule is applied more than the letter.

The competition is split into three classes: Novice, Intermediate and Pundit, with one pilot from each class flying for each competing club.

The pilot classes are defined as follows:

- **Novice – Any pilot who, by 1 April of the league year, has not flown in a rated competition (regionals, Inter-Services or junior nationals) and has not flown a 300k qualifying for Gold distance. Novices may fly any glider with a handicap of 100 per cent or less (that's an LS8) and must not carry water ballast (so any of the club single-seaters would qualify).**
- **Intermediate – Any pilot who, by 1 April of the league year, has not flown in a nationals level competition (except junior and overseas nationals) and has not flown a 500k qualifying for Diamond distance.**
- **Pundit – Anyone can be a pundit. If desired a pilot may fly in a higher class, eg, a pilot qualifying for Intermediate status may be entered as his club's Pundit.**

So this is the annual begging letter for competitors. This year Cambridge goes into the season as last year's winner and runner-up in the national event, but don't let that put anyone off! Pilots of all levels of cross-country experience are required.

As a Novice, flying in the ICL is a fun way to start your competition flying career, whilst being surrounded by more experienced club members who can help out with advice, tips and hints. In addition, with only six clubs taking part, giving a total of 18 competition gliders, the sky does not get overcrowded with aircraft.

To fly in the Inter-club League you should be cleared for cross-country and be able to provide your own crew.

Fly one day and crew the other is a very common arrangement for a weekend as you need commit only to a single day if you want.

If you are interested in participating in any of the rounds, which are detailed below, please contact me by email at julianbane@compuserve.com

The dates are:

2/3/4May	**Hus Bos / Soaring Centre**
16/17May	**Buckminbster / Saltby**
6/7June	**Cambridge / Gransden**
27/28 June	**Four Counties / Wittering**
11/12 July	***London / Dunstable***

Reserve round if others are scrubbed

Oxford



Weston from the east. The gliders are launching to the south. The club house is the building to the top right (Paul Morrison)





(Above) Daisy, OGC's T21 outside the club hangar (David Weekes) and (below) the club house from the north. The original Officers' Mess (white buildings) can be seen on the opposite side of the road (Paul Smith)

OXFORD Gliding Club (OGC) is a civilian club based at RAF Weston-on-the-Green in Oxfordshire. The airfield is situated north-east of Oxford, between Kidlington and Bicester, and lies just a couple of fields away from Junction 9 of the M40.

OGC can claim to have been one of the earliest gliding clubs in the country, with the first flights utilising primary gliders back in 1938. Since then, the club has operated at a number of locations, Cumnor, Aston Rowant, Kidlington Airport and finally it has been at Weston-on-the-Green for just over 50 years.

RAF Weston-on-the-Green is a very long-established all-grass airfield, and claims to have been in use from before 1916. The airfield remains as a Service airfield as it is used during the week as a military Drop Zone (DZ). It is a very common sight during the week to see Hercules aircraft over the field at low level dropping sticks of trainee parachute troops.

At weekends the airfield is shared by OGC and a civilian parachute club. Little remains of the original buildings, one large modern hangar houses the civilian drop aircraft and the parachute training and packing areas. Slightly away from the main buildings the gliding club has its own hangar, with a separate MT building. Attached to the hangar is the club room, toilets, glider workshop. showers, briefing rooms and an outside BBQ area. There is a large area for tents and caravans where club members are encouraged to spend the weekend.

The club is fortunate in having a large well-equipped glider workshop and club CofAs are performed by the in-house team. The winch is a mixture of the best bits from Tost (pay-on gear), Skylaunch (steel drums. gas converted engine, gearbox) and Austin Rover (the driver's seat), and uses steel cable. The club had a brief period of using a hydraulic winch a few years back but reverted to tried and tested technology as supplied by Skylaunch. Cable retrieve is by gas converted Range Rovers.

These provide high-speed cable retrieves to make the best use of the time slots the club has between drops. A spare low-tech but high-powered diesel winch is available for whenever the main winch is out of action. PMR Radio kit is used for comunication between the hangar, launchpoint, winch and airfield vehicles. A 'Hopper'-style bus and a couple of tractors complete the airfield equipment.

Launching from Weston there are two ill-defined runs over the grass airfield, a SW/NE run of about 1,300 metres, and a NW/SE run of 1100 metres. The drop aircraft operate from the mown grass runways, well away from the winch runs. Cutbacks in RAF maintenance sometimes lead to long grass over the non-gliding side of the field, although the club attempts to keep its own half of the field reasonably short. Airspace is good, we have FL85 over the site and the unrestricted Cotswolds area is just a few miles to the west.

Log keeping at the launchpoint is simplified by a PC-based log. All flight information is then uploaded automatically by the wireless network at the end of the day, and a computer in the club room immediately shows flight-times and costs. One further advantage is the launchpoint log also issues currency and medical warnings and provides the instructors with up-to-date pilot information on demand. Operation from Weston does require a certain amount of cooperation with the parachute club.

The glider launchpoint is in radio contact at all times with the DZ controller and the drop aircraft. Winch launches are only performed if no parachutes are in the sky and a drop is not in progress. The flying boundaries for the drop aircraft, gliders and parachutists are defined at a meeting between the duty instructors and the DZ Controller before any flying starts. A map is marked up and signed by both parties. If the wind changes during the day the field set-up may change but only with the agreement of all parties.

As the gliding area is always on the downwind half of the airfield, following a winch launch gliders turn immediately and fly into the gliding area before being allowed to thermal. Visiting aircraft should be aware that Danger Area D129 is centered on the airfield and, whilst the gliding area is usually downwind and to one side of the airfield, daily conditions may force a different set-up and a thus a briefing before visiting is vital. Similarly, the military may decide at short notice to bring in a Hercules – in which case all other flying activity stops.

The OGC committee are firm believers in club-based gliding, this keeps the costs down but does require time and effort from the membership. An example of this is mid-week maintenance evenings and also the regular group flying evenings that are run weekly throughout the summer. These provide a valuable source of income, the occasional new member, and a jolly good social evening!

Neil Swinton



The launch point on a quiet morning (Steve Winstanley)

At a glance

Full Membership: £195.00 p.a.
Junior/cadet: £97.50p

Launch Type: Winch – £6.00 club gliders
£7.00 private gliders
Junior/Cadet : £3.00/£4.00
(less than 4 minutes FREE to encourage cable break practice!)

Soaring fees: 25p/minute junior/cadet 15p

Club Fleet: K-13 x 2, K-8 x 2, Astir x 2, T-21, DG-505

Private Fleet: approx 25.

Instructors/flying members: 18/ 90

Type of lift: Thermal

Operates: weekends, Bank Holidays. Two weeks in August

Contact: www.oxford-gliding-club.co.uk
01845 0945265 (clubhouse)
07836 773210 (launchpoint)

130.1 mhz (callsign Oxford Base)

BGA Accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Registration	Damage	Date, time	Place	PILOT(S) Age	Injury	P1 Hours
113	Vega	2797 / EMP	substantial	26/09/08, 13:45	Surrey Hills GC	50	none	19
The glider veered to one side and struck a retrieve vehicle. The inexperienced pilot lost control after a bounced landing.								
114	Twin Astir	- / DSL	minor	30/09/08, 16:00	Dartmoor GS	62 50	none	n / a
The undercarriage collapsed on landing. After removal, it was noticed that the casting had been broken for some time.								
115	K13	3853 / HDC	none	11/09/08, 15:50	Derby & Lancs. GC	42 / 59	none/none	not reported
The glider was flown on to the ground without fully rounding out. The P2 was taken to hospital after complaining of back pain.								
116	Nimbus 3T	- / EVF	substantial	22/09/08, 16:10	Lasham GS	n /a	n / a	n / a
Retrieve winch failure while crosswind launching allowed the cable to drift towards the edge of the airfield. The parked Nimbus was extensively damaged when the cable was wound in by the main winch.								
117	ASW19	4203 / --	minor	20/09/08 --	Burn GC	52	none	280
Wheel up landing								
118	Piper Pawnee	G-BAUC	minor	24/09/08, 18:30	Southdown GC	58	none	3,000+
The wing and wheel were damaged after the aircraft tipped over while skidding sideways. The pilot was trying to steer the tug to extend the groundrun after a downwind landing onto wet grass into the short airfield.								
119	Piper Pawnee	G-AVXA	none	27/09/08, 15:00	South Wales GC	50	none	not reported
The motorglider's port wing struck a runway edge marker stone during the ground run after landing with a crosswind from the right.								
120	Slingsby T61	G-BUGV	substantial	29/09/08, 12:05	Oxfordshire Sport Flying	73	none	2,540
A parked glider was struck by the aerotow rope as the tug landed.								
2009								
1	Grob 102	2741 / EKF	minor	3/10/08, 12:35	Bristol & Glos. GC	64	minor	167
Multiple heavy, bounced landings following a low-level launch failure in turbulent, gusty conditions.								
2	K13	2405 / DVB	minor	4/10/08, 13:45	Essex & Suffolk GC	n / a	n / a	n / a
The canopy twisted and cracked as it was shut. A harness strap left hanging outside the cockpit caught under the hinge.								
3	Elfe S2	3374 / FMR	substantial	5/10/08, 14:30	Derby & Lancs GC	45	n / a	n / a
Split fuselage, broken elevator and tailplane mounting points caused by a tow out accident. The wingtip caught on a parked car.								
4	Fournier RF5B	not reported	substantial	8/10/08, 16:30	Portsmouth Naval GC	68 / 53	none/none	84
The aircraft swung off the runway after landing and struck a runway light. The fuselage underside was damaged, the propellor and undercarriage broken.								
5	Standard Libelle	G-DCNY	minor	8/10/08, 14:30	Scottish Gliding Centre	60	none	125
The glider hit the top of a bush, crashed and groundlooped after a low and slow approach into a part of the airfield known to have wind shadow.								
6	Discus	4120 / --none	none	22/10/08,14:30	Cambridge GC	68	none	61
Distracted by an open DV panel, the pilot allowed the glider to rise dangerously high behind the tug soon after take-off on his first flight on type. After the pilot lowered the nose to recover, a bow developed and the rope back released.								
7	not reported	4056 / --	minor	24/10/08 --	Windrushers GC	55/ 58	none/none	5,000
During a simulated field landing approach, the pilot got low on approach and the instructor was slow to take over. The glider's wingtip was damaged after hitting the top of a bush.								
8	n / a	n / a	minor	29/10/08,10:30	Wolds GC	n / a	n / a	n / a
After the winch stalled at the top of a launch, the driver managed to restart the engine and began to wind in the cable. Although the parachute was still in the air, the sagging cable damaged the clubhouse roof and a TMG.								
9	Dart 17R	1295 / 17R	minor	31/10/08,13:00	Black Mountains GC	n / a	n / a	n / a
The slipstream from a tug blew open the canopy of the parked glider. It had been left shut but not latched.								
10	K21	5300 / KRI	substantial	12/11/08,15:05	Kent GC	62/52	minor/serious	805
The glider stalled and landed heavily after the airbrakes were opened at about 20' agl. The glider had been flown through a complete 360 degree turn after a low-level cable break.								
11	Grob Astir	2391 / 642	substantial	15/11/08,11:00	Trent Valley GC	64	n / a	n / a
A tow out accident destroyed an aileron and damaged the wing.								
12	Ventus 2ct	4942 / KAS	substantial	22/11/08,11:00	Lasham GS	61	n / a	n / a
Wingtip struck parked car while being towed out.								

Obituaries

Tom Bradbury, internationally-renowned gliding meteorologist



WE ARE sorry to report that Tom Bradbury died on 27 January after a short illness.

Tom Bradbury was the rare combination of an expert meteorologist and a skilful glider pilot.

His extraordinary ability to observe and interpret small changes in the appearances of the air and clouds enabled him to find rising air, stay airborne and make progress when lesser pilots were forced to land.

Tom started his gliding career in 1956 with the RAF Gliding and Soaring Association, and joined the Bristol Gliding Club, based at Nympsfield, in 1957. He won the club's Evening World Trophy for greatest gain of height in 1961, 1962, 1969 and 1971 and the club's Cyril Uwins cup for longest cross-country flight in 1964 and 1974. On 31 May, 1974 he was the first pilot to fly a 500km triangle from Nympsfield, completing his third Diamond.

This was in a 15-metre Libelle glider and covered the route Yeovil, Cambridge and return to Nympsfield. On many occasions he would take a launch in the morning and return to land just before nightfall after flight times of up to nine hours.

These flights did not follow any particular route, but he just went where the conditions seemed to be interesting.

Consequently they did not qualify for the club ladder and were not well known to the club members, except those whose duties involved the flying log sheets.

Tom was very modest about his flying achievements, but was always happy to discuss and advise on meteorology and how it affected techniques for soaring.

To the general gliding fraternity, Tom was best known as a met forecaster at national and regional gliding competitions. Tom joined the Air Ministry Meteorological Office in 1941 and served in RAF Stations at home and abroad and finally worked at the Central Forecasting Office at Bracknell, where he was engaged until his retirement on developing the computer model used in today's forecasting .

His competition forecasting started with a local two weekend competition at Nympsfield in 1962 and, over the years, he officiated at numerous national, regional and microlight contests, gaining a reputation for the accuracy of his forecasts. He had a formidable array of electronic equipment which enabled him to receive raw weather data and hand plot it to his own requirements.

He accompanied the British Gliding Team to the World Championships in Finland, France and Germany.

His services to the sport were recognised internationally by the award of the Paul Tissandier Diploma in 1983 and at home by a BGA Diploma and by his club by an honorary life membership. He continued forecasting for the competitions at Nympsfield until 1994.

Around 1994, he worked with former Bristol club member Colin Pennycuick on a project for the Wetlands and Wildfowl Trust to track whooper swans on their migrations between their nesting grounds in Iceland and their winter grounds in Scotland and Ireland.

His pioneering work with Colin in providing accurate wind speeds from point to point to go with the GPS data from tags on the birds allowed their true airspeeds to be determined for the first time.

Tom wrote his popular textbook *Meteorology and Flight – a pilot's guide to the weather* in 1989, and he wrote a bi-monthly series of articles on meteorology in *S&G* from July 1989 until May 1998 and numerous articles for other magazines.

Failing eyesight stopped him from flying in the mid-1990s, and put a stop to his forecasting, but he continued his interest in the Wildfowl project to the end.

If anyone wants to make a contribution in his memory, it should go to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (*www.wwt.org.uk*).

Ken Brown

Fred Smith, Burn

FRED SMITH died during the early part of February, after a lengthy period of illness,

Fred's laugh and sense of humour were infectious, he was always one to push the boundaries just about as far as he thought they would stretch, then push again.

He would bounce back at all and any setbacks, and his enthusiasm was probably without equal, as on occasions were his exaggerations of his own flying achievements.

Even those who didn't count themselves as particular friends of Fred could do no other than admire his tenacity and his willingness to point the finger of accusation straight back at himself when such was merited.

He was also a very keen beekeeper, and kept most our members supplied with honey during the season. I never tried it myself, but most folk seemed to like it.

When the phrase was invented "when they made him, they broke the mould" it was specifically designed for Fred.

I had the pleasure of flying him several times in our Motor Falke during the last few months of his life; he simply loved being in the air.

He leaves a widow Celia and a son Nick.

I doubt we will see the likes of Fred Smith again, at our club, or anywhere else.

Tony Flannery

BGA Accident/incident summaries *continued*

13	K-13	2317 / D	minor	25/11/08, 9:55	Lasham GS	73/68	none/none	1450

The cable parachute strop and weak links hit the wing after the P2 moved the stick forward during the safety climb. He thought that the cable had broken.

14	DG-505	G-CKOX	minor	7/12/08,15:00	Seahawk GC, RNAS Culdrose	63/21	none/none	1370

Wheel-up landing on the runway at the end of a BI flight. Undercarriage warning failed to sound - CFI noted the importance of pre-landing checks.

15	Falke SF25C	G-OSUT	minor	17/12/08, --	Yorkshire GC	48/ --	none/none	not reported

The propellor struck the ground after the pilot applied power to keep the TMG moving as the aircraft taxied over soft ground.

16	Puchacz	2906 / HFH	minor	21/12/08,13:45	Trent Valley	--/48	none/none	n / a

Front canopy blew shut and cracked. P2 was strapping in to rear seat while P1 was assisting at launch point.

17	Jantar	G-HDAV	substantial	28/12/08,13:20	Dartmoor GC	66	none	not reported

One wing hit the ground, the other a tree as the pilot tried to complete a very low turn onto final approach.

18	Vega	2455 / 132	minor	1/01/09,12:15	Surrey Hills GC	35	none	185

Wheel-up landing on to the runway.

Obituaries

Alan White, 1927-2009



ALAN lost an eye in a childhood accident, but he was determined to be a pilot. On his first attempt he joined the Army Air Corps near the end of World War Two, lying about his age and initially managing to fool the medics about his visual problem. But he was found out, and that door was closed.

Living near Sutton Bank 20 years later, he saw gliders soaring the ridge and enquired about learning to fly. He joined the Yorkshire Gliding Club and did his early training as one of Bill Scull's guinea pigs on the 'begin with motor glider then convert to glider' system. He gained an A certificate on 8 July 1966. There is no record of any further certificates, but he continued flying two-seaters with Henryk Dokter and others.

In 1968 he took delivery of a K-13, BGA Comp number 492. He and Henryk flew it, on tow, from Dunstable to the Bank. By all accounts it was a hairy ride in poor weather.

In 1972 Alan offered me the chance to fly the K-13 with him in the Club Class Nationals, to be held at Dunstable in August. We had a great time, and finished 16th out of 25. I spent most of my time overseas during the next 30 years, which restricted my gliding and competition opportunities, so when I was in the UK I flew my own single-seater. Meanwhile Alan and his syndicate partner Jim Hill often flew together.

In Jim's words: "When he decided to syndicate the K-13 he offered me a half share. At that time I couldn't afford a half share so he accepted a quarter and even that was in instalments. With his business commitments, he didn't fly very often so I got the lion's share of the flying. He didn't seem to care provided that he could hop into the glider with a safety pilot whenever he came up to the club.

"As our relationship flourished, we decided to enter the Northerns and for several years in the '70s we could be seen propping up the lower orders. It didn't matter that we were not particularly talented; we just enjoyed being part of the competition scene. We always entered under his name, so much so that he actually got a rating in the National competition listing. Not bad for a one-eyed gent without even a Bronze C. He was extremely proud of that. Fortunately I had the Silver so technically I was in charge, but he did most of the flying. Just occasionally we had a difference of opinion on the correct direction to fly and it was a tribute to Schleicher's construction that the front and rear sticks remained in line."

In 1989, Alan ordered and put down a deposit for a DG-500M glider. It was registered to him as G-BRRG in November 89 and was the first two-seat self-launching glider on the UK register. Bureaucratic problems with the issue of a CofA meant that he and the members of the syndicate he formed were unable to fly it until October 1990 and then only on a permit to fly until the CofA proper was issued in September 1991.

Meanwhile Alan was having a personal battle with the CAA trying to obtain a PPL so he could fly solo despite his medical situation, exacerbated not just by having only one eye, but also by a heart problem, followed by replacement hip and shoulder operations.

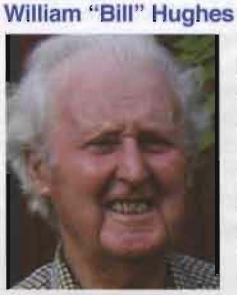
Nevertheless he kept trying and, in the meantime, flew the DG with other members of the syndicate, including several visits to Aboyne. Eventually further medical problems intervened and he made his last flight in 1994.

Alan has left us, but the White flying gene lives on. A brother was a Lancaster navigator during World War Two. Two sons have PPLs and have been active competition glider pilots – David was the Aboyne CFI for a while. A daughter flew gliders solo until family commitments took over and hopes to start flying again soon. One of his grandsons is now a Tornado pilot, and a grand-daughter went solo with the University Flying Squadron at RAF Leeming.

He asked that his ashes be scattered over Sutton Bank.

Sam St Pierre

William "Bill" Hughes



AGED 87, Bill was a popular instructor for many years at Derbyshire & Lancashire, Staffordshire, when they were at Morridge and also at Needwood Forest, formerly Marchington. For many years he was one of the regular summer course instructors at Camphill, introducing many to the joys of soaring flight. In 2007 he was appointed club president.

During World War Two he served with the RAF in Bomber Command, flying as crew in both Stirlings and Lancasters. Following demobilisation, he and his new bride Barbara built up a successful electric retail business in Longsight, Manchester.

An accomplished pianist he loved listening to and playing jazz music, but his outstanding passion was gliding – especially instructing. He had shares in Olympias, for many years his beloved Oly 463 – Number 401 – and, latterly, an ASW 20 and 19. He was the backbone of the club's summer courses for many years, his skill as a salesman encouraged many to join the club.

His daughter Val Roberts, who was the apple of his eye, greatly disappointed him by being tone deaf and unable to share his music. She redeemed herself by becoming a leading light as an instructor and long-serving chairperson at Marchington GC, now Needwood Forest GC.

Our sympathies to Val and husband Alan, their sons Iain and Paul, family and friends.

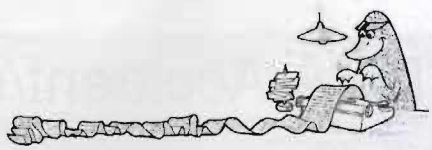
Dave Martin

BGA Badges

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
750K DIPLOMA			
772	Shaun Lapworth	From New Tempe South Africa Discus T G-TWOT	28.12.2007
DIAMOND BADGE			
738	Shaun Lapworth		
DIAMOND GOAL			
2-3248	Neill Atkins	Cranwell (Cranwell)	23.8.2008
2-3249	Alex Ward	Cambridge (Gransden)	28.7.2008
DIAMOND HEIGHT			
3-1705	Shaun Lapworth	Lasham (Minden)	20.3.2008
GOLD DISTANCE			
Peter Robinson		Dorset (Lake Keepit, Australia)	30.11.2008
Karl Martin		Cambridge (New Tempe, South Africa)	6.12.2008
Neill Atkins		Cranwell (Cranwell)	23.8.2008
Steve Pozerskis		Gliding Centre (Husbands Bosworth)	23.8.2008
Alex Ward		Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)	28.7.2008
GOLD HEIGHT			
Stephen Edwards		Cambridge (Portmoak)	16.10.2008
Timothy Bartsch		Kent (Aboyne)	30.9.2008
Bruce Brebner		SGU (Portmoak)	16.10.2008
David Bray		Oxford Sutton Bank	13.10.2008
GOLD BADGE			
2476	Karl Martin	Cambridge	6.12.2008
2477	David Bray	Oxford	13.10.2008
SILVER BADGE			
11960	Bruce Brebner	SGU	16.10.2008
11961	Colin Little	Mendip	25.9.2008
11962	Jeremy Bodian	Bristol & Glos	15.8.2008
AEROBATIC BADGES			
Standard Known	Phil Cumming	Booker	7.12.2008

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Ideally you will be an experienced glider pilot with good communication skills who is capable of liasing with club Chairmen & CFI's. Training for the posts will be provided if required & the BGA will reimburse any expenses incurred in the course of the RSO's duties.

To apply for the positions, please email a resume of your experience to John Hull at jh-touchdown19@hotmail.co.uk or fax 01264 773980







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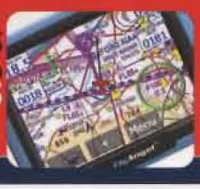
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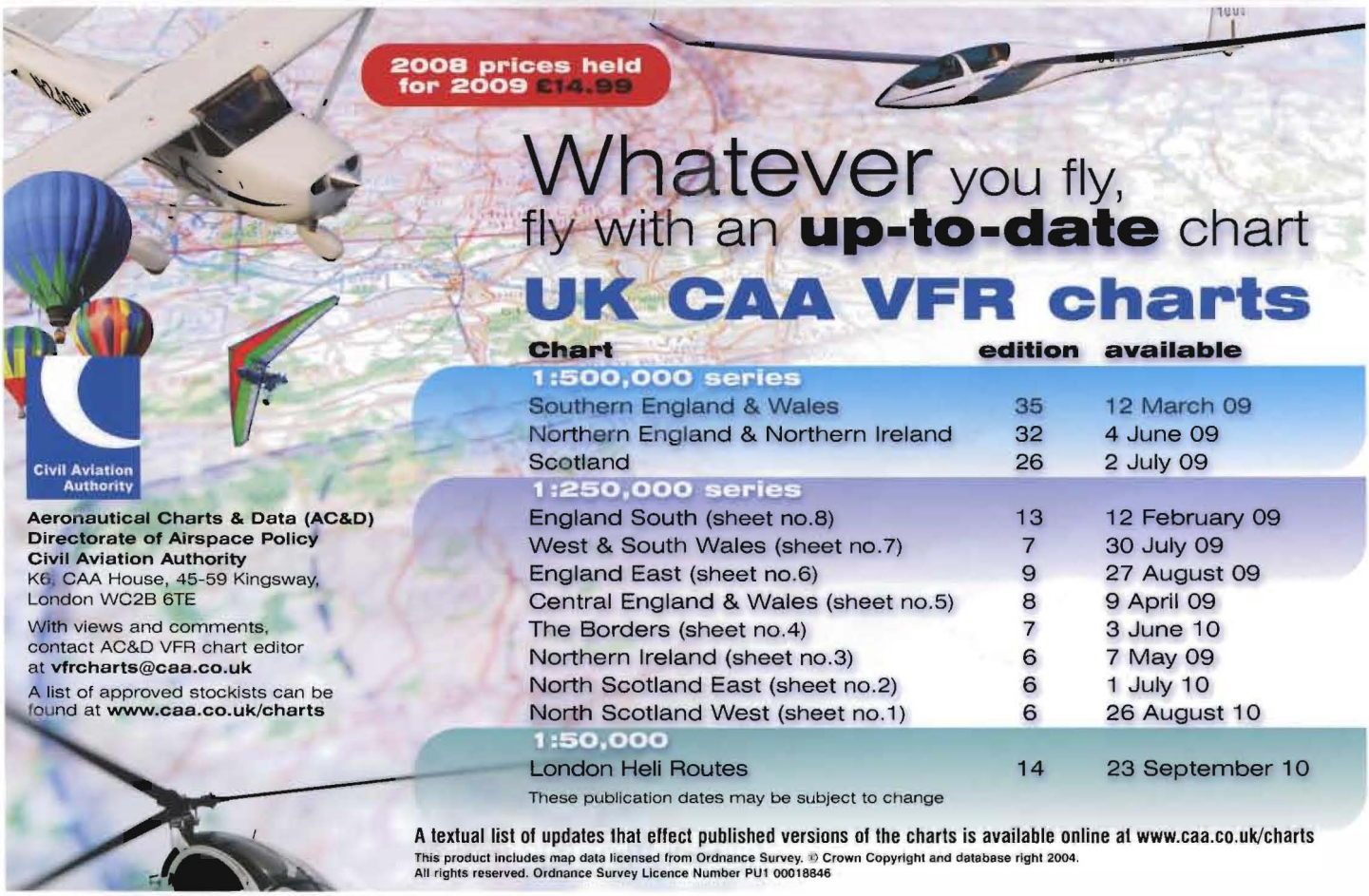
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