The Vintage Glider Club of Great Britain

NEWSLETTER

June 1981 No.40

UNEXPECTED EVENTS

After an early promise of good weather, the spring unfortunately gave way to many weeks of rain and sultry weather. Our first Rally of the season, held at RAF Cranwell, will be remembered for its unstable spring north-easterly winds. Although it was attended by only 4 vintage gliders, with a little assistance from club gliders, over 1,000 kms were flown cross country during 2 days of the very soarable 4-day weekend. Since that time, rains have attended rallies held at Keevil and Husbands Bosworth.

Every year brings us new developments and some of them are very tragic. We are extremely sad to report the deaths of two of our most prominent members: Rodi Morgan, who died on the 23rd of April as a result of head injuries sustained while taking off in an RF.4 from Shoreham Airport in January, and Mike Garnett, who died of a heart attack on the 21st of May. These two were part of the very life blood of our movement and we call upon those who are in charge of their many vintage gliders, some of which are unique, to help find only the best new owners for them.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW SECRETARY!

Our calls for a new Secretary to succeed Frances Furlong have not been left unanswered. We are extremely grateful and pleased that Robin Traves has accepted to take on this heavy task. Robin lives at "Rose View", Marden Road, Staplehurst, Kent (Tel: 0580 891625). He is a languages teacher and he can be telephoned or written to in German and French, as well as, of course, English! We are very lucky to have him in such a key position. He has asked to be forgiven for having already sent out annual subscription reminders to some people who have already paid! Such errors came about unavoidably during the transfer of Secretaryship.

Robin is the owner of the Meise, BGA 2273, and is married, with a family.

We wish him all the best with these new voluntary duties which are so important for the success of our Club.

THE NINTH INTERNATIONAL RALLY

Exact details of this event, which is to be held at Burg Feuerstein, West Germany, from Saturday 25th July to Sunday 2nd August, are about to be circulated to the entry. We can report that the Rally is to be opened by the Mayor of Ebermannstadt during Sunday 26th July, probably during the morning. We have since March been in possession of a provisional entry list. British entries include the following sailplanes: Rheinland, BGA 1711, David Jones and Toby Fisher; FW Weihe 50, BGA 2602, Francis Russell and partners; T.21C, BGA 1030, Collin Street and partners; T.31, BGA 1376, Collin and Alice Anson and Reb. Rebek; Prefect, BGA 1152, Pat George and partners; Gull 1, BGA 378, Tony Smallwood; Rhönbussard, BGA 337, C. Wills; Condor 4, BGA 2292, John Richardson and partners (to be present if late entries are accepted). Geoff Moore will be going without a glider but will share Ernst Walter's Mü 13D. Ted Hull will be going without a glider but will share Angus Munroe's Norwegian Prefect! Ken and Edith Crack also plan to be present at the Rally.

There will be no fewer than 10 Swiss entries. These will include, for the first time, the WLM 2 HB-562, a glider that has been entered by five pilots. The WLM 2 prototype first appeared at the 1954 Championships at Camphill but was pronounced uncontrollable by the BGA Technical Committee and, therefore, not flown during these Championships. Let us hope that it has now quietened down! The Roth brothers and Cheesly will be entering both their Spalinger S.19 and Spyr 5. The Moswey 2a is to be flown by three Hungarian pilots who are apparently now resident in Switzerland. We are glad to see that the Weihe 50, HB-556, an Austrian built machine with minimum dihedral, will be present. So will other familiar gliders: Minimoa 36 HB-282 (Werner von Arx), S.18 (Peter Egger), S.18 (Willi Schwarzenbach), Weihe 50 (Jost Frei and Pit Burwitz), Meise HB-384 (four pilots). We regret that Eugen Aeberli and his Hütter H.28 are not on the original Entry List. The Moswey 3 HB-373 (Jürg Derendinger) will be present if accepted as a late entry.

Germany will be represented by a Goevier 2 and a Minimoa from Münster, an Mü 13D (Rainer Karch and three partners), another Mü 13D (Ernst Walter), Erich von Hovel's Grunau Baby 2B with stained fuselage and transparent fabric, and, for the first time, Jörg Ziller's immaculate Meise. Many of the other familiar German gliders will be flying but not the Cumulus. Otto Bellinger, Hermann and Barbara Lederer, Walter and Hilde Sorge, Gerhard and Hilde Gottstein have indicated that they would be present.

The French will be represented by a Nord 1300 (Maurice Renard) a C.800 (Patrick Combet, President of Dédale) and a Castel 301S (Alain Mathieu).

The Dutch are coming with two Goevier 3s, a Prefect, a Jugoslav Weihe, a Doppelraab, a Ka-4 and a Grunau Baby 2B (Neelco Osinga).

Hungarian gliders might be flying for the first time at one of our Rallies: a Gobe two-seater and a Vöcsök intermediate glider may be entered. Also, Jan Scott is trying hard to bring over a Pratt & Read side-by-side two-seater. This would be the first American glider to fly at one of our Rallies.

Thirty-three entries had been recorded at the end of March.

THE RENDEZ-VOUS RALLY AT MALDEN

Jan van Beugen writes that so far only twelve entries have been received and he asks us to give further advertisement to the Rendez-Vous Rally. Anyone who still wishes to enter his glider should quickly write to him at Mambo Straat 30, 5802 LC Venray, Netherlands. Malden Airfield is near Nijmegen and is the home of the Nijmegen Aero Club. We shall be greeted there with a home-built 6-drum winch!

Arrival day is Sunday 19th July (there is another meeting taking place at the airfield the previous day) and the General Briefing will take place at 9 p.m. Flying days will extend from Monday to Thursday and the departure for Burg Feuerstein, a drive of about 500 km, will take place on Friday 24th July. So far as we know, aerotowing will not be available because of noise abatement regulations. Anyone still wishing to have accommodation should write to Jan van Beugen at once because we will be sharing Nijmegen with an International Physical Fitness march, 20,000 strong, during our visit!

Members already entered for the Rendez-Vous Rally are, from Holland - Jan van Beugen (Goevier 3), Jan Vermeer (Prefect), P. C. Jansen (Jugoslav Weihe), Neelco Osinga (Grunau Baby 2B), Martin Louwinger (Goevier 3), Martin Goosens (Prefect), Vertjan Vermeer (Rhönlerch 2); from Germany - Ernst Walter (Mü 13D) and Paul Serries (Goevier 2); from Britain - Collin Street and partners (T.21C), Francis Russell and partners (Weihe 50), C. Wills (Rhönbussard).

Please do not forget to take evidence of THIRD PARTY INSURANCE and C OF A.

Accommodation at Burg Feuerstein

The KOMITEE OLDTIMER 81, G.u.E. Frey, Zornstrasse 10, D-6520 Worms, West Germany, have asked that details of everyone's accommodation be sent to them so that there can be some co-ordination. Also, everyone has been asked to bring some gifts that could be used for a Tombola Evening.

Will British members attending the above Rallies kindly bring extra food (such as cheese) and drinks so that we can entertain our members from other countries.

THE TENTH INTERNATIONAL RALLY

We can now report from DÉDALE, the French Vintage Gliding Club, that they are prepared to run the 1982 International Rally at one of three locations in France: (1) The military airfield of Nancy-Luneville in the East of France, (2) the great airfield of Chateauroux (well known as the venue of World Championships) in the centre of France, (3) La Montagne Noire, a famous national gliding centre dating from at least as far back as 1941. It is situated near the Pyrenees and offers, as one would expect, hill soaring slopes. All these sites should have hangar space for our entire rigged fleet.

Patrick Combet, the President of DÉDALE, will be the chief organiser of the Tenth International Rally.

FURTHER RALLIES TO BE HELD IN BRITAIN THIS YEAR

LATE SUMMER BANK HOLIDAY RALLY. Saturday 29th - Monday 31st August, at the South Wales Gliding Club at Usk, Gwent. If possible, a visit will be organised to the aeroplane collection of RAF St. Athans, west of Cardiff. This visit would take place in the event of bad weather. We will be sure of a warm welcome at this "wave" site situated half a mile east of the B.4235 linking Chepstow to Usk. This is a beautiful tourist area. Although no clubhouse accommodation is available, there are plenty of guest houses, pubs and hotels nearby. The club house has recently been endowed with mains power, water and flush toilets to make life more comfortable. A barbecue will probably be organised during the weekend. Reciprocal membership is set at £3 a day or £10 a week. Flying charge for 2000 ft aerotow will be £6.50, winch launches £1.15, caravan parking per night £1.15 or £5.50 a week, tent per night 50p. Our local contact there is the CFI Peter France (tel: 02915 263). The Clubhouse telephone number is Raglan 536. Those needing further details can also contact Geoff Moore, Berkhamstead 73258.

AUTUMN RALLY AT CAMPHILL AND ANNUAL DINNER. 25th-27th September 1981, at the Derby and Lancs Gliding Club. Arrivals are welcome from around mid-day on Friday 25th September. Winch launches and site checks will be available. The bar will open at 7.30 p.m. and provide hot snacks. Breakfast on Saturday will be served from 8 to 9 a.m., and lunch from 1 to 2 p.m., but flying will continue throughout lunch-time until dusk. There will be bungee launches if there is a soarable westerly wind. Tasks will be set, weather allowing. Wet weather activities will include visits to local places of interest, such as Chatsworth House and the caves at Castleton. There may be a film show in the club house. The Annual Dinner will be held in the club dining room at 7.30 for 8 p.m.

Breakfast on Sunday will be served from 8 to 9 a.m., lunch from 1 to 2 p.m., and tea from 5 to 6 p.m. Flying is planned throughout the day.

All participants are required to bring evidence of their aircraft's C of A and insurance.

Accommodation: If you wish to stay at Camphill, beds are available in four £1.00 double bunkrooms for Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. Please book well in advance as space is limited. Tents may be pitched for 50p a night on the edge of the flying field, and there will be space for caravans at £1.00 a night. Please indicate on the booking form if you intend to bring a tent or a caravan. A good number of pubs, hotels and guest houses are available locally.

Apart from the Annual Dinner on Saturday and the Friday evening meal, advance booking is not required, but it would assist the stewardess at Camphill if you could indicate which meals you intend having. Breakfast at £1.10, Tea at £1.20 and Lunch at £1.40. The bar will be open from 12.30 to 2 p.m. and from 7.30 to 11 p.m.

The flying costs are as follows: Temporary membership, £1.00 a day payable each day; winch and bungee launches, £1.20; time in the air in Camphill two-seaters 8 pence per minute.

Approximately 20 gliders will be accommodated. Local farmhouse accommodation may be arranged if there is a demand. Please contact John and Margaret Collins (tel: 0742 351416) for information. Geoff Moore (tel: Berkhamstead 73258) and Rex Moorey (tel: 01 363 0876) will assist otherwise. Useful telephone numbers at Camphill are the Clubhouse (Buxton 871 207) and the Steward (Buxton 871 270).

The price of the VGC's Annual Dinner at Camphill on Saturday 26th September is £5.00 per person (wine being bought separately). The menu will consist of: Starter - Egg Mayonnaise; Main Course - Roast Beef, Yorkshire Pudding, Roast Potatoes, Cauliflower Cheese and Carrots; Sweet - Cherry Pie and Cream, or Cheese and Biscuits; Coffee.

RECENT RALLIES IN BRITAIN

The Easter Bank Holiday Rally (17th-20th April)

This Rally was held in the idyllic surroundings of the RAF College at Cranwell. The legendary north-easterlies of this area were on time for the meeting and corresponded with a fine but very unstable weather. Despite the poor attendance (only four gliders - the Skylark 1 BGA 725, the unique Gull 4 BGA 565, the 1943 Swedish built JS Weihe BGA 1230, and the Rhönbussard BGA 337) this was quite an exceptional event, not least because of the long distances (totalling over 1000 km) covered by these four crafts whose pilots were not all holders of a Silver C.

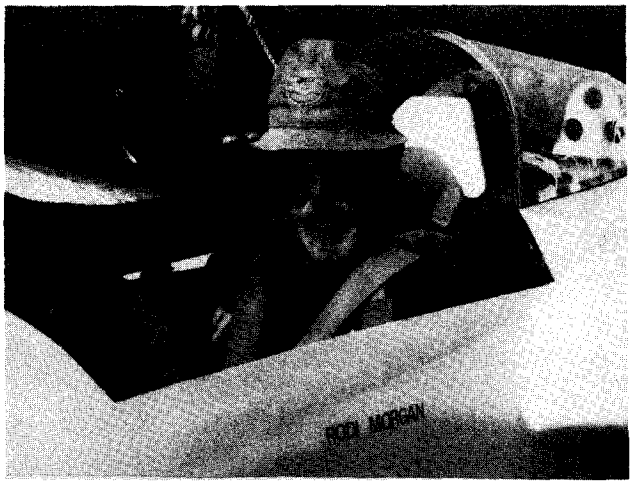
The success of the Rally owes a lot to the great enthusiasm of the RAF Cranwell Club and their CFI, Bruce Tapson, who set tasks and encouraged pilots to try them irrespective of whether they had a retrieving team or not (he would get them back somehow ...). The meeting enjoyed the support of Air Vice Marshal John Brownlow, himself a very good glider pilot, Commandant of the RAF College at Cranwell, and of Group Captain John Whittingham, Cranwell's Officer Commanding Basic Flying Training. The two men were constantly on the field with their families, encouraging, helping and flying.

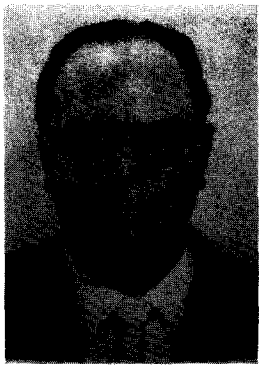
Three of the four gliders participating were based at Cranwell. Geoff Moore had brought his MU 13D for one day but did not rig because of the strong winds prevailing. On Saturday 18th April, Bruce Tapson set, among other tasks, a 102 km triangle, which was completed by Chris Wills in his Rhönbussard. Having set about trying to reach the first turning point, he had the satisfaction of finding airfields along the entire route from which quick aerotow retrieves would be possible. But these were not required. Despite almost unbearably cold temperatures in his open cockpit at 3000-4000 ft, Chris reached the second leg which followed the River Trent. Near the airfield at Syreston, he saw a shape wheeling unassailably high above. It had the unmistakable silhouette of the Slingsby Sky that had once been flown by the Empire Test Pilots School at Farnborough. The final leg was short and into wind. Having found a final thermal to 4000 ft over the airfield of

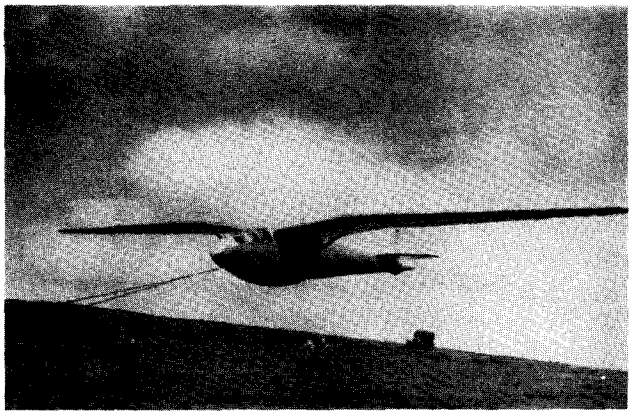
(continued on page 5)

CAPTIONS TO PHOTOGRAPHS (from left to right - top to bottom)

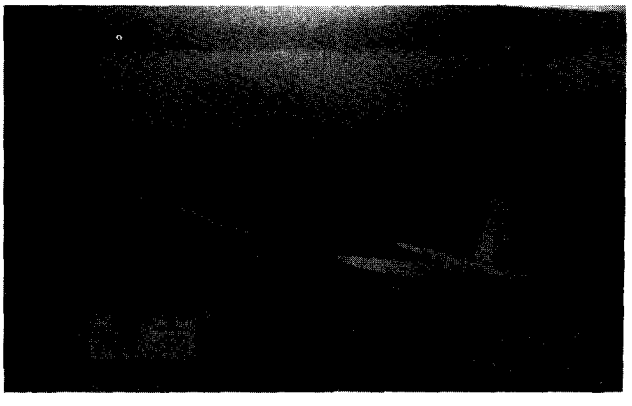
1. Rodi Morgan during the occasion of the Rhonsperber's (BGA 260) first flight since Easter 1940, during July 1980.
2. Anton Dirksmeyer, a well-known glider inspector in the Rheinland and a true friend of vintage gliders. He attended most of our International Rallies.
3. The Gull 1 in which Stephenson flew across the Channel in 1939. Dr. Slater's postcard.
4. Geoffrey and Beryl Stephenson. Geoffrey had just won the Scottish National Gliding Contest some years ago in a Skylark 3. He is still flying ultra modern fibre glass sailplanes now.
5. Left. The recently magnificently restored Polish Orlik on display this year in Phoenix Arizona during the US soaring convention. This aircraft is in red and white Polish national colours. It is the last Polish pre-war built sailplane that is still airworthy. Restorer was John Serafim.
6. The new Rhonadler 35 which Klaus Heyn is building at home in Eislingen/Fils. This was the state of the aircraft when cold weather stopped glueing last winter. Since the weather has become warmer, Klaus has been plywood covering the unskinned areas. The very high standard of his workmanship is evident.

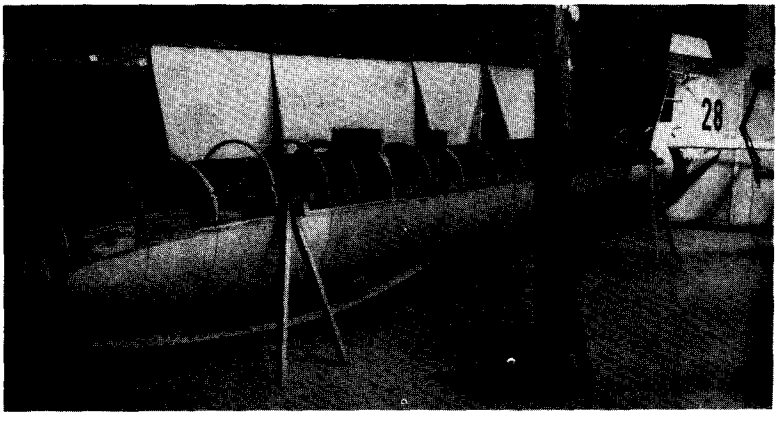

BODY MORGAN

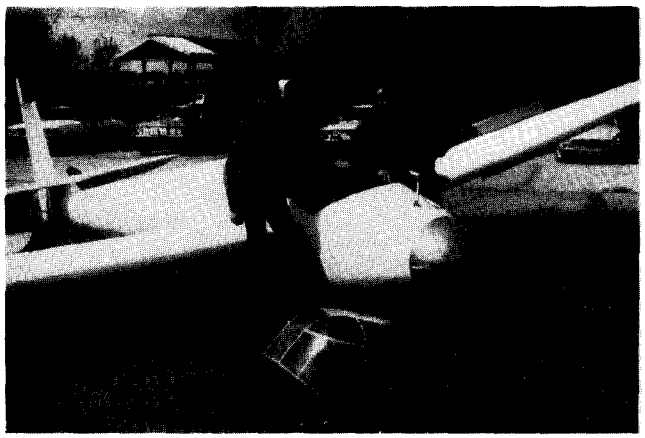




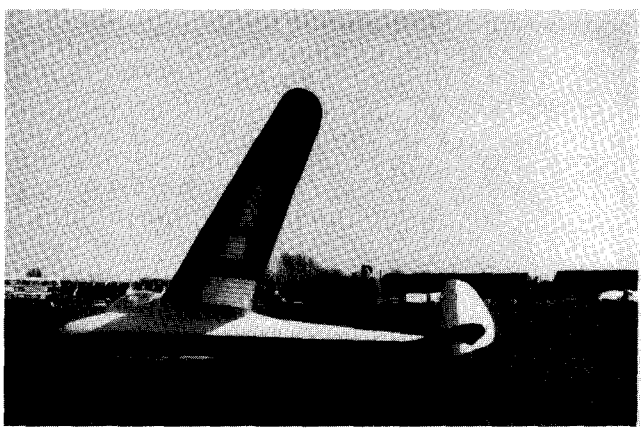


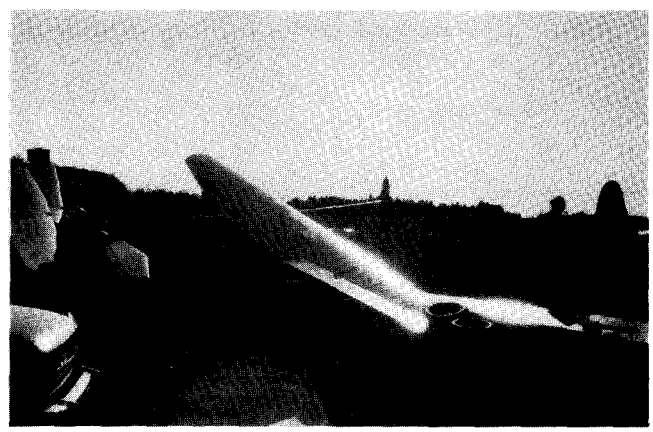


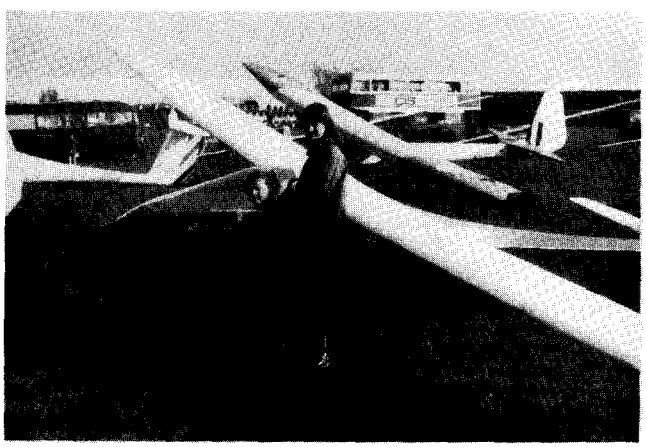

28





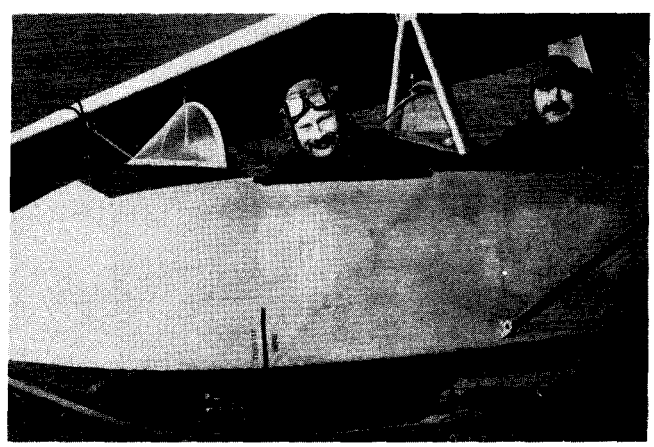












Fulbeck, some 7 miles from home, Chris found himself with 2500 ft in hand as he arrived over Cranwell. Beyond the airfield he joined the Gull 4 in one of the best thermals of the day. However, after three hours in a cramped, cold cockpit, he decided to call it a day and land. Bruce Tapson had set an excellent task.

On Sunday the 19th, the north-easterly wind was considered too strong for vintage gliders, but the Eagle, newly repaired by Dave Almey, and the Twin Astir, were constantly soaring from 1500 ft winch launches. In fact, the RAF Cranwell Commandant was still thermalling the Twin Astir in the dusk at 8.15 p.m.

On Monday 20th April, it dawned on several of our members that they were rightly positioned in England, with the north-east wind, to make a distance attempt to the south-west, and that this did not happen very often. Once again, the ever-encouraging Bruce Tapson said that he did not mind if free distance was tried and that he would get everyone back somehow. So, after being delicately launched to 800 ft by Anthony Wheatley, Chris Wills rapidly climbed the Rhönbussard to 4000 ft and set off down wind. However, because of cloud over-developing at midday, he had to land at Edgehill airfield, 128 kms away, at 2.15 p.m. He is most grateful to Mrs. Tapson, her son, and one other, for retrieving him by road, as the Chipmunk had become unserviceable. The best flight of the day was achieved by Barry Briggs in his Weihe. Starting from a second winch launch, one hour after the Rhönbussard, he eventually landed at Enstone airfield, 140 kms from Cranwell, after having been almost to Dunstable and then to Cirencester, via Enstone, and then back to Enstone, to shorten the retrieve. In all, he had covered nearer 250 kms. Peter Woodcock landed his

(continued on page 6)

CAPTIONS TO PHOTOGRAPHS

These photographs are all from the VGC's Rallies which have so far taken place during 1981 in Britain:

1. Photographed at Husbands Bosworth (Coventry Gliding Club) on 24th May 1981. The very original 1943 German built Goevier 2, BGA 1992, with one of its owners, Bob Arnold, and an ATC helper. This aircraft is unique and is one of the jewels of the VGC's collection.

2. At RAF Cranwell on 18th April, during the VGC's Spring Rally. The last surviving of the 4 Gull 4s which were built by Slingsbys in 1947. BGA 565 is owned by a syndicate at Cranwell and one of its owners is Geoff Bolton who organised our Easter Rally. Originally BGA 565 was owned by the London Gliding Club.

3. At Cranwell during Easter, and actually based there, is this 1943 Swedish built JS Weihe, BGA 1230. Among the owners are Barry Briggs and Don Beach. The former achieved the longest distance flight during the Easter Rally in this aircraft. It will be seen that a start has been made to cover the aircraft with transparent doped aerolene.

4. The Rhönbussard, BGA 337, "au moment de gloire" (after 102 kms triangle) as the golden sun sank in the west behind the Cranwell clock tower, at the end of a perfect day.

5. Peter Woodcock in the unique Skylark 1 (although it is just possible that another may exist in South Africa) prepares for a winch launch during Easter at Cranwell. BGA 725 was the first of 2 Skylark 1s to be built by Slingsbys in 1953 and was the first British sailplane to be built using a laminar flow wing profile.

6. Air Vice Marshal John Brownlow, Commandant of the RAF College at Cranwell before a flight in the recently repaired Slingsby Eagle.

7. Seen at Cranwell on 19th April, when the north-east wind was considered too strong for vintage gliders. Geoff Moore, one of the VGC's two Rally Secretaries, Malcom Minjoodt, Barry Briggs, Don Beach and Jan Carter. Geoff, Malcom and Jan brought their MU 13D-3, BGA 2267, on the 19th, but they did not think it wise to rig it.

8. In the rear seat of the T.31 is Geoff Bolton, who organised the very successful Easter VGC Rally at RAF Cranwell.

Skylark 1 at Husbands Bosworth, 78 kms from Cranfield, to complete both his Bronze and Silver Cs. Late in the evening, Chris Wills was awarded the Cranwell Cup for his two cross countries in the Rhönbussard. We understand that, while the Cup itself is to stay at Cranwell, small replicas are to be awarded to the pilots who have put up the best performances at Vintage Rallies at RAF Cranwell.

It was quite clear from this weekend that Cranwell and its surroundings are excellent for lift. We were asked to come again and indeed, we certainly will. We wish to thank all members of the RAF Cranwell GC, and in particular Geoff Bolton of the Gull4 syndicate, for organising the Rally, and giving us a wonderful experience.

Dave Almey

No description of activities at Cranwell would be complete without referring to this wooden glider repairer extraordinary. He has repaired Olympias, T.31s, Motor Tutors, an Eagle, a Skylark 2 and other wooden gliders in quick succession. Until now he has operated in the club's workshop but is acquiring new premises for his firm, "Peterborough Sailplanes", in Peterborough. He is an excellent restorer and repairer of Vintage gliders.

The remains of the Hutter H.17a (BGA 818?), which belonged to the late Mr. Richardson, are now in his hands. Thanks to Peter Selinger's microfilms, he has the necessary drawings to undertake its repair with a friend and hopes to achieve this work in two years' time. He has also found a syndicate to own and restore Mr. Richardson's Grunau Baby 2A, BGA 270, so that the future of yet another of these now rare GBs is assured. We wish this young man all the luck in the world with his venture "Peterborough Sailplanes", and are sure that it will become a haven for wooden gliders in need of restoration. The remains of two Grunau Babies and a JS Weihe are for sale at Cranwell (see the For Sale column).

The other Vintage gliders based at Cranwell are: T.31, BGA 2724; T.21b, WC 498; T.21b, WC 923; L-Spatz 55, BGA 2388; Prefect, BGA 815; Weihe, BGA 1021; and an Eon Baby.

We should mention that on the same Monday, 20th April, the T.21b privately owned at Husbands Bosworth set course for Plymouth. Unfortunately, through flying too fast and using the "dolfin technique" it had to land at Moreton in the Marsh. However, the spirit was there! Further landings on this airfield should not be encouraged as it is a Fire Service exercise field ...!

May Day Bank Holiday Rally (2nd-4th May)

Proceedings at the Bath and Wilts Gliding Club were marred by the incessant low pressures and the generally wet weather that have bedevilled Britain for the whole of the spring. However, some thermal flights to over 4000 ft were achieved on the first day by Louise Coates in the Weihe 50 and by David Jones in Toby Fisher's Meise. The bad weather was more than compensated for by the hospitality of club members led by their CFI Ron Lynch, his wife, and Richard Grundy.

The gliders taking part in the Rally were mostly from the London Gliding Club. These were the Weihe 50, BGA 2602 (Francis Russell and partners), Mü 13D-3, BGA 2267 (Geoff Moore and partners), Gull 1, BGA 378 (Tony Smallwood), Moswey 4a, BGA 2227, (Ted Hull), Meise, BGA 2080 Toby Fisher), Rhönbussard, BGA 337 (Chris Wills).

Spring Bank Holiday Rally (23rd-25th May)

This took place at the Coventry Gliding Club, Husbands Bosworth, and met with the same weather as the one reported above. The Husbands Bosworth T.21, BGA 1081, Goevier 2, BGA 1992 (flown by Bob Arnold), and the Weihe, BGA 1230 (flown by Don Beach) were much in evidence during our one flying day, which was shared with all the gliders of a club contest. There were many other Vintage gliders present, but many of them were not rigged for fear of being caught in a sudden downpour. Among those which were not rigged were the Rhönbussard, BGA 337; the Moswey 4, BGA 2227 (Ted Hull); and the Prefect, BGA 1152 (Pat George). We believe that Geoff Moore's Mü 13D-3 was rigged and flown. However, the weather did not allow us to perform well. Many thanks to the Coventry Gliding Club for allowing us to participate in their club's contest week. Other gliders present were: Olympia 419, Mike Boxall and Adrian Coombes; Eon Olympia, BGA 1035, Derek Harris; Eon Olympia, BGA 514, C. Rodwell.

RESTORATION WORK IN BRITAIN

A most remarkable effort in restoration has been carried out by Ken Harris and his team at the Oxford Gliding Club, Weston on the Green. The Grunau Baby 2a, BGA 270, has been literally rebuilt around its original fittings. The resulting machine weighs only 332 lbs, incredibly light for a GB. It also has a new enclosed trailer. The original BGA 270 had been built in 1936 by Fred Coleman (in his bedroom ...) and belonged to the Oxford Club at Kidlington during the 1950s. We congratulate Ken Harris and his helpers for this achievement. To our knowledge, there are only four of this now rare version of the Grunau Baby remaining in Britain.

David Jones' new King Kite is steadily growing and its fuselage is now piercing out of its nest at 270 Lavender Avenue, Coundon, Coventry, like a great cuckoo. David hopes to have it finished next year.

Southdown Aero Services have temporarily had to suspend work on the wings of their new Falcon 1 because of the pressure of work on fibreglass repairs. At the London Gliding Club, work is continuing on the Minimoa, BGA 1639. The tailplane has been rebuilt professionally after severe glue failure and work is proceeding on the fuselage and one wing. Geoff Moore and partners are continuing work on the new fabric covering of their Grunau Baby 2B-2, BGA 1289, built in 1944 by Flugzeugbau Petera. The aircraft is being recovered with aerolene and will be finished with the increasingly popular clear dope.

A Third Rhönbussard will soon be Airworthy in Britain

After Rodi Morgan had had his accident in January, he requested that his labour force (Fred Stickland and Jeremy Menzies) should be transferred from the Isaacs Fury aeroplane, which was being built as his collection's towplane, to repairing and restoring the Rhönbussard, BGA 395. This aircraft was one of four Rhönbussards flying in Britain immediately before, and just after, the war. It gained its first BGA C of A in May 1939 and was owned by the Passold brothers. The restoration of BGA 395 in new paint and transparent fabric will be yet another magnificent contribution from Rodi Morgan to the Vintage Gliding Movement's fleet.

OLD PILOTS FLY AGAIN

We are pleased to report that Jack Dewsbury, the last surviving pre-war owner of the Rodi Morgan restored 1935 Rhönsperber, BGA 260, has now gone solo in a more modern sailplane (Ka 18) at Lasham, after having last flown a glider in 1948. Jack started gliding in 1931 and once flew the Rhönsperber from a Bungee launch at Roundway Down, near Bristol, right across London, to a landing near Southend on Sea. He used to fly so much before the war that some thought that he might grow feathers like a bird! During his first check flight with Derek Piggot in a fibre glass two-seater, Jack soared to a greater height than he had ever attained before the war ... and he had held the British height record!

Another pilot to fly again recently at Lasham was Charles Wingfield, Britain's Gold C No.2!!! Charles was flying a fibre glass sailplane in an advanced Course. Just after the war, he once flew his Kite 1 "Gracias" 160 miles from Redhill to the Long Mynd. We believe that he last flew gliders during the early 1950s. He took part in the 1947 US National Contest flying an Eon Olympia and was a member of the British Team at Samaden in 1948, flying again an Eon Olympia.

THE VINTAGE CAR AND AEROPLANE RALLY
21st June 1981 at Finmere Airfield

This was attended by one glider, the Rhönbussard, BGA 337, which, in spite of a variometer malfunction, was able to give a display of high and low level soaring for 3½ hours, and then, after landing to a warm welcome, was put on display at the end of the vintage aeroplane line up. The launch was a 2000 ft aerotow by kind permission of the RAF GSA Bicester. The pilot was Chris Wills. The weather was a light unstable north-easterly wind and sunshine.

OBITUARIES

We are very sad that this issue should have to report on the deaths of a number of members and very dear friends.

Rodi Morgan

It is with great sadness that we have to report that Rodi Morgan died on 23rd April, at the age of 69, as a result of head injuries sustained two and a half months earlier, while taking off in an RF.4 from Shoreham Airport on 11th January.

The son of a Welsh Methodist clergyman, Rodi began his aviation career as an RAF apprentice at Halton. During the war, he was an engineering officer in North Africa and did sterling work recovering crashed and abandoned aircraft. He became well-known for the buccaneering spirit which he brought to his job. Working at Tangmere in the 1960s, he became an instructor with No.623 Air Cadets Gliding School and also found the time to qualify as an instructor with a local para-scending club. Among his many credentials, he was an RAF Squadron Leader, a Chartered Engineer, and a member of the Royal Aeronautical Society.

At the age of 64, scoffing at the idea of retirement, he founded a firm on Tangmere Airfield called Precision Pulleys Ltd. From that time began one of the happiest periods of his life as a collector of old gliders. In 1970, Rodi found the last remains - a wing and the fuselage - of the only Rhönsperber ever to fly in England. This aircraft had won the 1938 and 1939 British National Contests and had flown for the last time in Easter 1940, following which a wing had become damaged by damp so that its components, despite several efforts at restoring the aircraft, came to be lost one by one. Its restoration to pre-war condition by Rodi and helpers probably represented the greatest ever restoration feat in the gliding world. The aircraft flew again at Lasham in July 1980.

Rodi joined the VGC during its inaugural year in 1973 and was therefore one of its founder members. Since that time Rodi, and Billie Caldwell, his companion of thirty years, were to be seen with their motor caravan at nearly all our Rallies, no matter how remote (we never knew which of his gliders he had brought with him until the last minute as his trailer had the names of no less than five of them!) We were always assured of a warm welcome in his caravan, and Rodi's hospitality became legendary, not only at gliding sites in Britain, but also on the Continent. At the Klippeneck, Rodi once celebrated no fewer than five champagne birthdays in one week! The spirit which he brought to his job during the war, he also gave to the VGC.

His funeral at Worthing was well attended by VGC members, including three from Munster. We extend our sympathies to all his relatives and especially to Billie Caldwell. He was so much part of the VGC that we shall never be the same again.

Mike Garnett

We have lost another, most important member in the person of Mike Garnett, who suffered a heart attack during May. All those of us who had the opportunity of meeting him at our Rallies will remember a most kind and original man. Among his achievements as a promoter of the Vintage glider movement was his restoration of a 1935 Scud 3. Having moved house not long ago, he set up a new workshop in which he continued repairing a Goevier 3 and building a new Gull 3, the second prototype of what proved to be one of Slingsby's most remarkable pre-war sail-planes. Mike was an aircraft designer and an engineer working for British Aerospace.

He and his wife were among the best liked members at the Bristol Gliding Club at Nymphsfield. With his passing away, we have lost someone who stood for the essence of our movement. We offer our sincere sympathies to his wife and his son.

Anton Dirksmeyer

With great sadness, we have to report the death of yet another friend of the VGC. Anton Dirksmeyer died on 20th February, aged 72, following a stroke a few days after returning from holidays. Anton was an almost legendary glider inspector, very well-known in the Rheinland. He was always there when he was needed, and if something was not quite right, he would come back again and again. With his great experience, he knew when to "pass things over", and this he did with a wink and a suspicion of quiet humour on his face.

Anton was born in Osnabrück in 1908. After studying car and aircraft construction, he joined the Aradowerke in 1934 as a designer. But before this he had become a workshop foreman in the DLV Oldenburg and Hannover Group. He later moved on to other firms and worked as an engineer with Focke Wulf from 1941 to 1945. After the war, Anton ran his own design office until 1955 and then joined the Cologne Ford Motor Company where he worked until his retirement.

We shall remember his small figure, his humorous face puffing at a pipe and his twinkling, bespectacled eyes from his many attendances at our International Rallies. Not long ago, he told us that he needed to carry out only a few inspections a year to keep his inspector's ticket valid. We are quite sure that, in fact, he carried out a great many more inspections.

Our condolences go in particular to the members of the former Fliegende Holzwürmer Club, where he had many friends.

Air Commodore "Paddy" Kearon

One of the founder members of the RAF GSA and a well-known glider pilot, Air Commodore Kearon died recently in Saudi Arabia after having been knocked down by a car. He began gliding in 1945 with the RAF at the former Reichssegelflugschule at Saltzgitter when gliding became a recreation for Allied Forces in Germany. He will be remembered as a former captain of the RAF gliding team, and as a man who has inspired a great many gliding enthusiasts with his skill and leadership.

Group Captain John Butler

John Butler, who died at the end of last year, was one of the most popular and hard-working members of the RAF Chilterns GC which is now based at RAF Halton. He was a founder member of the RAF GSA who started gliding in 1945 at the former Reichssegelflugschule of Scharfoldendorf. At the time, he was also among the allied officers who managed to get the Volkswagen factory at Wolfsburg operating again.

Squadron Leader Denis Osland

We sadly have to report the death, of cancer, of this distinguished officer, who was a former CFI at the RAF Rest Centre at Scharfoldendorf. As a CFI there during the 1950s, he was responsible for up to 47 operational sailplanes. He was a quiet man who ran the centre firmly and well. His best flight was when, during an RAF Contest at Scharfoldendorf, he flew a Weihe, from a winch launch, 300 kms to the Dutch coast.

- - - - -

NEWS FROM GERMANY

Werner Tschorn and his son Wolfgang have won first place in their class in the Aachener Vergleichsfliegen Contest with their FW Weihe 50. In a letter dated 29th May, Jochen "Cassius" Ewald reports that this competition, comprising some 50 gliders in three classes (open and 15 m, standard, club and two-seater) enabled one to fly and earn points on 5 out of 7 competition days (on 1st May and the following 3 weekends). The Tschorns won the club and two-seater contest flying their Weihe 50 against K-8s, a K-6, K-7s, a K-13, an L-Spatz 55 and even a club Astir (which took second place). They had to struggle against strong winds in the late evening hours, and even the Standard class gliders were forced to land in fields from 500 m to 5 km short of the airfield. The Weihe always came back! Congratulations to Werner and Wolfgang for having truly waved the flag of the Vintage Movement in Germany. Isn't it wonderful that a Weihe designed in

1938, 43 years ago, should still be able to compete with more modern sailplanes. It has once again proved itself to be a great sailplane worthy of its designer, Hans Jacobs.

A most worthwhile project has been undertaken by our member Peter Selinger at Landschreiberstrasse 21, D-7000 Stuttgart 75, West Germany (Tel: 0711 47 70 78). On his own initiative, he has undertaken to microfilm pre-war glider drawings and is constituting a small film library. Not content with this, he has most generously sent copies of the microfilms to C. Wills, at "Wings", The Street, Ewelme, Oxon (tel: 0491 39245) so that both he and Chris are now in a position to send prints of the microfilms to those who wish them. The cheapest prints (35p) are of A.4 format, but the larger ones would be more expensive. The A.4 prints are quite clear in most cases, but we do not know if this would remain so were they to be blown full size. A.4 prints of the Hütter H.17a drawings have already been sent to Dave Almey, who is having them drawn up full size by a draughtsman. While 35 mm microfilming might not be entirely satisfactory from the point of view of working drawings, it is certainly the cheapest form of microfilming (although expensive enough) and thus of keeping records of past sailplanes.

Peter Selinger has so far made microfilms of the Göppingen 1 "Wolf" (obtained from the USA), the Hütter H.17a, the Hütter H.17b, the Rhönbussard, the Rhönadler 35, the Göppingen 3, the Minimoa 36, the Pruefling, the Kranich 2 and now, we believe, the Habicht. We praise Peter for his efforts and thank him warmly for having sent us copies. At present, JS Weihe and FW Weihe 50 drawings are being microfilmed.

We hope that other VGC members will be following his example. It is so much in keeping with the spirit of the Club. All they need to do is to pay for the 35 mm microfilming of the drawings of their gliders ... and this will spare Peter and Chris some of the heavy costs involved (microfilming the drawings of just one type is enough already!!). We ask members who have them to co-operate in allowing drawings of the most common types still existing, such as the Grunau Baby, the Meise, the JS Weihe, the SG 38 and the Slingsby gliders, to be microfilmed so that drawings can be made available to those who need them.

The Rhönadler 35 Project is well under way. Now that the weather has become warmer, Klaus Heyn, of Klingenstrasse 23, 7352 Eislingen/Fils, West Germany, has resumed skinning the top of the fuselage and fin. The wings haven't yet been started but the rudder and tailplane are complete. The glueing operation had to wait for the warm weather.

On Sunday 28th June at 10.00 hrs, in the Wasserkuppe Gliding Museum, an exhibition entitled "The Flying Family Dittmar" was opened. The material was made available by Karl Vey, the official Archivist of the West German Aero Club. The exhibition covered the flying achievements of the brothers Edgar, Heini and Walter Dittmar, their sons and their grandsons, from the 1920s until the present time. Finally, wreaths were laid in the Ehrenhalle to commemorate Heini Dittmar, Ernst Jachtmann, Ludwig Kahlhert and Charlie Marsen. The latter will be remembered in England as Carli Magersuppe who, with Kronfeld during 1930 and afterwards, did so much to stand British Gliding on its feet.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

Hugo Roth has given us interesting details of the 1936 Prototype of the Moswey 2. He states in a letter that the owner of this sailplane is an 18 year old boy who had recently joined his club. He had asked his ex-girlfriend to keep her eyes open and tell him if she saw an old glider. One day she had informed him that she had seen a yellow glider lying in a builder's yard between trucks and graders. Having telephoned the builder to find out whether the craft was for sale, he had been told "yes ... actually, it is". The boy had then asked how much a poor mechanic apprentice would be charged for the machine. The price offered was £90 inclusive of transport by truck to the boy's home.

This glider has the registration HB-204, which means that it is the oldest in Switzerland. It appears to be in good condition although some woodwork is required. The problem for this young man is now to find someone who can carry out this work or help him by showing him how to do it.

Hugo reports that the origin of the sailplane has been established. It was built by Aircraft Factory Müller in Wald (near the lake of Zurich) in 1935/6 and was flown in 1937 by Heiner Müller at the Wasserkuppe International Meeting. In 1938, with M. R. Spahni in the cockpit, it won the National Championships. During 1946 and 1947, its fuselage broke in two during accidents on landing and take off. Efficient airbrakes were then built into the wings. It has a 13.8 m span, 5.8 m overall length and its empty weight (in 1936) was only 125 kg (!). Its max L:D was an impressive 1:26.5.

As regards the Spyr 4, it has been established that this sailplane has been sold three years ago by an owner in Pfaeffikon, not far from Zurich, to a gentleman by the name of Villiger. This aircraft is in good condition and minor work will suffice to make it airworthy again. Its present owner bought it with the intention of becoming an "oldtimer" and plans to attend an oldtimer Rally when he will have the opportunity. This Spyr 4 was built in 1942 and has not flown since March 1979.

NEWS FROM AMERICA

As reported in our previous Newsletter, the Polish Orlik is now regularly flying again over Arizona, immaculately restored and resplendent in red and white Polish national colours and with a canopy of tinted perspex to protect the pilot from the powerful desert sun.

Jan Scott is awaiting permission from the Argentinian government to bring over to the USA two Horten 15s, the Horten 15c (IA 41) "Urubu" side-by-side two-seater for his collection, and a Horten 15 m (IA 34M) for Bob Storck. The first of these two sailplanes has been considerably modified from the machine that flew in Germany and is reported to be one of the best handling Hortens in Argentina. The remarkable Horten test pilot, Scheidhauer, once flew this sailplane solo some 300 km across the Andes. The Ho 15 m was one of two which flew in the 1952 World Championships in Spain. The Argentinian pilots did not do well at that contest, not so much because of inadequate equipment, but because of lack of experience in competition flying. Unfortunately, the fact that they did not win the World Championships with the Hortens made the Argentinian Government withdraw their support from Horten sailplane projects.

At present, Jan is trying hard to find cheap transport for his Pratt & Read side-by-side two-seater to Europe so as to take part at the Burg Feuerstein International Rally. He has abandoned the idea of obtaining a Horten 1B from Argentina because of the aircraft's remote location at a club in the Pampas. We understand that the Scott Airpark now prides itself on 7 or 8 Vintage sailplanes.

NEWS FROM HOLLAND

We have received the following details on post-war Dutch production from R.G.A. van Loosbroek, of Heesch in the Netherlands, part-owner since 1978 of a 1947 Grunau Baby 2A. He says that many old Dutch gliders have been destroyed or have left the Netherlands and have therefore lost their original Dutch registration. "So we are very glad", he says, "to have obtained our Vintage glider which is still Dutch registered and, in so doing, to have preserved a part of Dutch gliding history."

"In December 1945, the Dutch Gliding Association ordered 72 gliders from Fokker. These were 36 ESGs (Grunau 9 Schaedels palters), 24 Grunau Babies, 6 Olympias, 6 Goevier 2s. Our own Grunau Baby 2A was among the Grunaus (PH-153 built in 1947). Many of these gliders have been burnt over the years because of glue problems (they were built with casein glue). Only two of the Grunaus of that batch of 72 sailplanes, PH-152 and PH-153, are still flying today. These can be found at Nistelrode near Uden, where there is also a Goevier 3 (PH-211) built by Wolf Hirth, a Skylark 2B (PH-227) and a Rhönlerche 2/Ka 4 (PH-247)."

Mr. van Loosbroek recalls that his Grunau Baby was bought from another VGC member, M. V.A.S. van Leeuwen-Ringer and expresses the hope of being able to join in a forthcoming VGC meeting.

Another survivor among these 72 gliders is the Fokker built Goevier 2, BGA 1642, owned by Margaret Dickens of Rushden, Northants.

It is a reflection of that time in 1945, that the firm of Pander en Zonen, which had built some of the best-loved light aeroplanes in Holland before the war, and aeroplanes which had done much to stand the Dutch civil flying movement on its feet, should be "discontinued" in 1945 because of having built over 3000 SG.38 Schulgleiters for the Germans during the war. All documents were destroyed and all the firm's personnel were sent to prison; while the firm of Fokker, which had itself built 708 Bücker Bestmann training aeroplanes for the Luftwaffe, was allowed to continue. It will be noticed that the relatively inferior Schaedel-spalters were built and not the SG.38s, which were apparently "political dynamite"!

NEWS FROM FRANCE

The members of "Dédale" have quite obviously made a serious effort to ascertain the situation of surviving Vintage gliders in France. It is already apparent that many of them still exist in that country and that several clubs have tried to keep them in an airworthy condition.

"Dédale" have established that, in 1979, 8 Nord 2000 were flying and 17 more grounded. 4 WA 20s were flying, as against 18 known to exist. The figures were respectively as follows for a number of French Vintage gliders: Castel C.311, 3 flying and 6 grounded; AV 36, 7 and 11; C.800, 5 and 32; C.25S, 3 and 10; Breguet 900, 1 and 1. It also appears that during that year, none of the 4 C.30 1s and 7 C.310 Ps known to exist have flown. This picture of the Vintage glider situation in France is probably far from complete but is sufficient to indicate the rescue work that awaits the French Vintage Gliding Club.

NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA

On 9th December last, the Olympia "Yellow Witch" flew a 514 kms triangle. The flight was made during the Sunrasia Mini Comps at Mildura, with turning points at Baranald and Birchip, and qualified its pilot, Keith Nolan, for the 500 kms distance Diamond. He was airborne for 7 hours 49 minutes. Eight sailplanes in the Sport Class completed the task on that day. The Olympia was the last to land, at about 8 p.m. The thermals were not particularly strong (usually 1-3 knots) but they continued until late. On several occasions, the Olympia reached 10,000 ft with a maximum of 10,800 ft, though at other times the ground was within 1100 ft.

We believe that this is the best flight ever achieved by an Olympia. Perhaps other long distance flights have been flown by Olympias (Nord 2000s) in France, but never such a triangle.

The "Yellow Witch" was built by Arthur Harding in Melbourne during 1946-1948, and until this year it had completed 3,200 hours and 53,000 kms cross country. The best distance previously known to have been covered by an Olympia in Australia, was flown by Mervyn Waghorn in 1955, when he flew the Sydney Soaring Club's silver Olympia 303 miles (488 kms) in a straight line from Narrowmine to Wangaratta, the Australian Distance Record of that time.

VINTAGE GLIDERS FOR SALE

Gull 1, BGA 378: ¼ share in this unique and historic sailplane for only £950. Contact Mike Beach, 41 Church Street, Twickenham, Middlesex, Tel: 01 892 9975.

JS Weihe, BGA 1021: Swedish fuselage, German wings etc. Jettisonable U/C. Blown/moulded canopy. Modified short span ailerons. Open trailer. £1,600 ono. Barry Briggs, 52 Main Road, Ravenshead, Nottingham, Tel: 06234 2411. Aircraft can be inspected at RAF Cranwell GC.

Slingsby Prefect: Modified with elevator trimmer. Closed and open canopies. Basic instruments + turn + slip and compass. Parachute. Wings were recovered with fabric recently. For quick sale - £750. Tony Dickenson, 147 Brookdale Avenue South, Greasby, Wirral, Merseyside, Tel: 051 677 5982.

Remains of Grunau Baby 3 and Swedish built Grunau Baby 2B-2: £100 each. Formerly belonging to the late Mr. Richardson, they are now being offered for sale by Mr. Richard Boyton, Toppesfield, Great Yeldham, Suffolk, Tel: 0787 237771.

Ka 3: 10 metre lightweight vintage type soarers. 2 structurally complete airframes partly repaired for rebuilding. Full working drawings and some materials included. £400 each or £700 the pair. Airworthy example available for test flying. Leigh Hood, Tel: 0748 832523 after 12.8.81, or write to 9 Kestrel Drive, Scotton, Catterick, North Yorks.

COLOURS AND MARKINGS OF GERMAN GLIDERS 1922-1945
(Addenda)

Our article on this subject in our February Newsletter has led our member Hans Folgmann to point out a number of inexactitudes concerning dates and to add additional information. In the interest of historical truth, we are reproducing his comments.

In our article we mentioned that the DLV (Deutsche Luftsport Verband) Period lasted from 1934 to 1937. This is in fact incorrect since this period started in 1933. We also stated that the "NSFK was part of the Hitler Youth which encouraged boys of 12 to 17 to fly". However, Hans points out that the two were independent organisations. The NSFK itself comprised a number of organisations and had the obligation to train members of the Flieger Hitler Jugend in flying.

Whereas boys of 12 and over may well have had the opportunity to take part in model flying contests organised by the NSFK, they had no chance of starting to glide before they were 15. For the record, boys had, following a law passed in 1938, to join the Deutsche Jungvolk for four years, from the age of 10 to 14, and then the Hitler Jügend, for another four years until they were 18. There was no chance of them flying in the Jungfolk, but they could start with the Flieger Hitler Jügend a course in practical engineering and training in woodwork. Only at the age of 15 could they begin to glide. The first year course which started when they were 14 included work on a glider which was the collective achievement of all those taking part in the courses.

It was laid down in 1939 that members of the Flieger Hitler Jugend could only volunteer for the Luftwaffe after having reached the age of 18. This means that the many rumours about youths of 17 being drafted as fighter pilots after having been trained solely on gliders are not true, even though reports on the emergency fighter programme might lead one to believe them. The truth is that, at the end of the war, a great many German aircraft were grounded through lack of fuel so that there was a surplus of pilots, and that many of them were sent to battle on the ground.

The Flying Hitler Jügend was therefore only one of the several organisations which the NSFK was obliged to train. It gave boys of 14-18 years of age the opportunity to learn flying, although only boys of 15 and over could actually take to the air. It must be stressed that this was the ONLY way one could learn to fly in Nazi Germany.

The HJ became the Youth Organisation of the NSDAP (Nazi Party) in 1926. In 1935, the Reichsluftsportführer became responsible for the flying training of the Flieger HJ. Membership of the latter could only be entertained if, apart from the health requirement, the world philosophy of life of the Nazis was agreed with. Already, at that time, was the principle "erst Nationalsozialist, dann Flieger"! (first National Socialist - then Flyer).

Three Periods of Markings: Marking Regulations in Germany at that time follow three distinct periods - 1922 to 1933, 1933 to 1937 and 1937 to 1943. Hans Folgmann points out that on 20th October 1930 an official order was issued for gliding and free ballooning which provided for the Certification of a glider, enabling it to be flown outside its own airfield area and to be taken abroad either by road or by air. The request for certification had to be presented to the Oberpräsidents of the areas in which the proposers were domiciled. The request had to be backed by a Certificate of Insurance, by the stamp of the official inspector confirming the aircraft's airworthiness, and by a declaration that the aircraft was not registered in any other area. It was also suggested that a name for the aircraft should be proposed by its owner. This 1930 order therefore created the basis for official glider markings in Germany for the first time. However, as, by October, the flying season was over, the practical carrying out of the order could not happen until 1931. Until 20th October 1930, there was in Germany complete freedom from state regulations governing gliders. Gliders which did not leave the areas of their airfields were still, even after the above date, free from the above order and did not have to have markings. Therefore, no photographs can be found of any gliders with markings from before 20.10.30, as the order on that date called for them for the first time. The second period of markings, the DLV (Deutsche Luftsport Verband) period, lasted as already noted, from 1933-1937, the DLV having been formed on 25th March 1933

and registered in Berlin on 3rd May of that year. Retired Captain Bruno Loerzer was proposed as its first President and confirmed by Hermann Goering, then Reichskommissar for Air. At his command, Bruno Loerzer, who had in the meantime been promoted to the rank of colonel, was retired from the leadership of the DLV on 1st November 1935. His place was taken, as Reichsluftsportführer, by Colonel Alfred Mahnke. When the DLV was formed on 25th March 1933, 16 Luftsportlandesgruppen were created. On 6th July of that same year, a law was passed which required aircraft, including gliders, trailered aircraft and free balloons, to display the Hoheitzflagge (Imperial Flag) whenever they left the frontiers of the Reich. As this law did not apply to gliders staying in the country, they could continue flying with their previous markings. Aircraft displaying the Imperial Flag had equal black, white and red horizontal stripes on the starboard side of their fins and rudders. The port side displayed a red stripe, a white circle and a black Swastika at 45°, all with a common centre.

A great many photographs dating from that period show gliders with the above markings, including Primaries which had no hope of ever crossing the Reich's frontiers. It seems likely that these markings served a propaganda purpose. The order requiring the colouring of gliders to indicate the region where they came from appears to have been in force only from 1935 onwards.

The third period of marking, which is the first NSFK period, extends from 17th April 1937 to 25th June 1943 (and not from 22nd October 1937 as we had indicated on the basis of a German book). It was quite clear that the German entries to the August 1937 Wasserkuppe International Contest all had NSFK markings. There is no connection to be found with the month of the new provisions, April, and the Führer's birthday. Following the closing of the DLV on orders from Hitler, the NSFK was founded on 17th April 1937, equally on orders from the Führer. The territorial organisation of the new NSFK Groups were partly based on the organisation of the disbanded DLV but the previous Luftsportlandesgruppe 5 was broken up. There are reasons to believe that, in view of the maintenance of the old numbering system and the disappearance of No. 5, an action in the East was already envisaged with No. 5 earmarked for future occupied territory. This is indeed what happened because No. 5 became allocated to the Warthegau, that is, annexed Polish territory near the river Warthe. We can also mention the case of the NSFK Brigade 125 "Weichselland", which had as Reichssegelflugschule, Vosswinkel, near Graudenz. (Weichsel is German for Vistula, Wisla-Polish, the river running through Warsaw).

Reichssegelflugschule for Pomerania

In our last Newsletter, we conjectured that Leszno might have been the Reichssegelflugschule for Pomerania. Hans Folgmann states that this was not so. Leszno was in Polish territory until 1939, and was never part of Pomerania (Pommern). After the invasion, it became an airfield in the newly annexed Warthegau and was called, in German, Lissa. There was indeed an important gliding school in Pomerania. It was called Leba and was founded in 1930. It had small sand dune soaring slopes, similar to those at Rossitten. Leba was closed in 1938 as it was not suitable for new requirements. After that time, there were small Segelflugübungstellen (Sailflying exercise places - as the NSFK used to call them) which had the status of being part of a Reichssegelflugschule. By far the most important of these was Neumühlenkamp, in the Schlawe region. With the closing of Leba, there were no other fully-fledged Reichssegelflugschulen in Pomerania.

Concerning the Rheinland which is stored with other German and Polish sailplanes in the Polish Air Museum near Krakow, Hans Folgmann has revealed that this is an FVA 10b probably identical to the one owned by David Jones, and that, almost certainly, it had formerly belonged to the Eisenbahnergruppe (Railwaymen's Group) of the NSFK which was centred in Breslau (Polish-Wrocaw). This was a special group similar to the NSFK Gruppe Lufthansa. This Rheinland was probably often flown by the famous glider pilot, Paul Steinig. At the end of the war, it was on the airfield of Grottgau-Woisseldorf, near the town of Brieg, where it fell into Polish hands.

GERMAN WARTIME PRODUCTION FIGURES

Following the article on that subject in our last Newsletter, Phil Butler, of the Merseyside Aviation Society, has sent us further information concerning the abbreviations used for German glider firms. These are as follows:

SFP - Segelflugzeubau Alexander Schleicher, Poppenhausen. (Grunau Baby 2Bs etc.)
FGP - Flugtechnische Fertigungsgemeinschaft GmbH, Prag. (Prague) (23 Mü 17s)
JSF - Jacobs Schweyer Flugzeugbau GmbH, Darmstadt. (425 GB-2Bs, 344 Weihes)
SFD - Schwarzwald Flugzeugbau Max Prinz zu Fürstenburg, Donauschingen (255 GB 2Bs, 81 Mü 13Ds)
PFH - Petera Flugzeugbau, Hohenelbe (4104 GB 2Bs, 1380 SG 38s)
RFN - Rathjens Flugzeugbau, Naumberg (Dr. Ing. Joachim Rathjens) (1300 SG 38s)
KFW - Kärtner Flugzeugwerke, Josef Oberlerchner, Spittal/Drau Carinthia, Austria (2684 SG 38s)
PZH - Pander & Zonen, Den Haag, Holland (3381 SG 38s)
ESG - Segelflugzeugbau Edmund Schneider, Grunau/Riesengebirge (2134 GB-2Bs)
FSH - Ferdinand Schmetz Segelflugzeugbau, Herzogenrath (601 Meises)
WHN - Wolf Hirth Nabern, Teck (51 Habichts)
SHG - Sportflugzeugbau Schempp Hirth. Kirchheim Teck (57 Goeviers)
MFC - Ing. J. Mraz Flugzeugfabrik, Chotzen, Bohemia, Czechoslovakia (1312 Kranich 2s) (Note: Does anyone know where Chotzen is, or what it is called now? We believe that this firm continued production after the war and made Fiesler Storchs (Mraz Caps in Czech)

These official records do not mention the alternative PFH, namely Petersen (Flugzeugwerke?) Hamburg and also other firms which were known to exist such as Peschke Flugzeugbau Minden, which produced Grunau Babies, according to our reports, and such as Flugzeugbau Kittelberger, at Rheinau-Hochst near Bregenz, which produced Weihes.

The firm PFM Peschke Flugzeugbau at Minden had built at least one Horten V 11. The firm also had a branch in Berlin which built some Horten 3bs.

Additional 108 type numbers are 108-250: Horten 3; 108-252: Horten 4; 108-253: Horten 6. Phil Butler believes that these numbers were originally in the 8 (powered aircraft) series.

Hans Folgmann writes that the 108-66 Grunau Baby 3 designed during the war was very different from the Grunau Baby 3 which first flew during the early 1950s. He also says that the drawings of the Horten 14 "Olympic" carry the type number 108-50 which we had thought belonged to the Rhönbussard!

SWEDISH PRODUCTION FIGURES DURING THE WAR

Following our account in the last Newsletter, Phil Butler makes the following comments:

1. I thought that AB Flygplan operated at Malmö, not at Norrköping. The Grunau Baby 2B-2 serial No. 001 was built by AB Flygplan. Earlier, one of the club built Grunaus had been built by Norrköping Model och Segel-Flygklubb in 1938.

2. AB Svenska Kanoverken at Halmstad built a Hütter H.17 in 1939 followed by the first Meise in 1941 as in the published table. At this point, the firm set up a subsidiary called AB Flygindustri. Apart from the licence built types, AB Flygindustri designed and built its own sailplane, the Fi 1, of which about 7 were built, and then the Fi 3 troop carrying glider for the Royal Swedish Airforce.

3. The Olympia Meises with serial Nos. 001-005 and built by AB Kockums Flygindustrie were in fact built in 1946, the registrations and dates being SE-SDK 26.6.46, SE-SDL 29.9.46, SE-SDM 28.2.47, SE-SGB 14.12.46 and SE-SGC 29.9.46.

4. AB Kockums Flygindustri also manufactured a batch of "Baby Falk" (The Lennart Henninger LH.22) which used Grunau Baby wings on a welded steel tube fuselage. The prototype was built by Henninger (SE-SFI registered 13.5.46) and about 18 more were built by AB Kockums Flygindustri.

Phil Butler, who supplied this information, is responsible for the Merseyside Aviation Society publication "British Gliders". His address is at 35 Gawsworth

Road, Golborne, Warrington WA3 3RB. Our original information had come from Knut Uller, Sergels vag 11b, S-21757 Malmö, Sweden.

We are extremely grateful to all these correspondents for supplying us with information and keeping our historical debate alive!

FROM FABRIC TO FIBRE GLASS
A Potted History of the Bath and Wilts Club

About eighteen years ago two gentlemen approached a Mr. Ken Stephens with a view to starting a gliding club; although these two gentlemen were instrumental in starting the Bath and Wilts Club, they soon fell by the wayside before either of them flew solo.

A public meeting was called at the local Y.M.C.A. About thirty people turned up and various proposals were put forward. Fortunately one of the people present was a qualified instructor so the start looked promising. A committee was formed and the two gentlemen were the Chairman and Secretary respectively. After gathering subscriptions from prospective members a working capital was at hand and could be used to find a suitable site.

Apart from the one instructor, another qualified glider pilot had now joined forces. All sorts and sizes of fields over the length and breadth of Somerset, Wiltshire and parts of Gloucestershire were surveyed without success, until one day a member stumbled across the ex-R.A.F. airfield at Keevil. This looked like an ideal site and the fight was on to cut through the red tape and obtain permission from the M.O.D. for its use. Lengthy negotiations began over rents, use of runways, peri-track, hangars, club house, etc.

The immediate asset of the site was a 2000 yard long runway which meant that the club could get going fairly cheaply to start with by auto tows in the form of Ford V8s and Jaguars; the Jaguars were soon dropped as the pistons had a tendency to go in various directions except up and down.

The first two aircraft to operate under the banner of the Bath and Wilts Club were a Grunau Baby and a T.31; the Grunau was the first to bite the dust when an early solo pilot spun it in on approach and stepped out of the wreckage with a damaged ankle. Sadly, the T.31s fate was more serious - while a pupil was practising a simulated cable break, he attempted a circuit and spun in on its final turn, killing the pupil and the instructor. The accident cast gloom over the club and membership suffered a setback. However, the acquisition of a T.21c from the London Gliding Club and an ex Godfrey Harwood Swallow soon produced solo pilots, and a number of syndicated aircraft soon began to appear in the form of Skylarks and Oly 463s.

The launching equipment now consists of an American F100 automatic truck, a purpose-built truck which looks like a moon-buggy, and two Austers. The Club fleet now consists of two Bocians, Ka 6e, and a Pilatus, and of course various privately owned aircraft including some 'hot ships' as some people like to call them.

The Bath and Wilts Club is proud of the fact that it has 'home grown' a champion in the shape of Andrew Davis, who has attained international recognition by becoming national and European champion.

The membership of the Club now stands at one hundred and is steadily growing. The next hurdle facing the Club is raising the funds to purchase the site which is in danger of being sold out from beneath them within the next two years.

We must wish this charming gliding club every success for the future, as their loss will, I am sure, be our loss also.

REX E. MOOREY

Issued by:
Chris Wills, "Wings", The Street, Ewelme, Oxon OX1 1AA) Editors
Pierre Béguin, 23 Gresham Road, London SW9 7NY)
Robin Traves, "Rose View", Marden Road, Staplehurst, Kent. Tel: 0580 891625 - Hon. Secretary
Rex. E. Moorey, 58 Fox Lane, Palmers Green, London N.13) Rally Secretaries
Geoff Moore, "Arewa", Shootersway Lane, Berkhamsted, Herts.)
Ken Crack, 45 Church Crescent, London N3 1BL - Hon. Treasurer