

the Vintage Glider Club of Great Britain

Newsletter No.43

Editorial.

There are some who have said that the best way of ensuring that vintage gliders do not continue to exist is to expose them and deliver them in to the hands of a vintage gliding club, so that they should be quickly flown to destruction. There are even some among us who have said that this might be the best way for them to go, in a flurry of glory, rather than to remain despised and dust covered in the back of a hangar. However, to these pessimists, we should like to state that of the four gliders which we have broken, during the nine years of our existence (not a bad statistic in itself, compared with that of the rest of the gliding movement but we would rather it had never happened), the first, the Rhonbussard, BGA 395, is repaired and the Weihe, BGA 448; and Kranich, BGA 1092; are gradually being repaired and are in excellent hands. Thus those who have had the recurring nightmare of our gliders' destruction can now sleep better. 4 gliders broken, among the 100 that our members are flying (4% in nine years), and three of these are being repaired, and the many more that our members have brought back. These positive statistics far outweigh the disasters. After a previous Newsletter mentioning something of this point, we were almost at once beset with an unparalleled disaster and a glider was broken. However, we believe that we are past this hurdle and that the Vintage Gliding Club will now soar forward to new glorious heights of success.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our members all the best with their vintage gliders, on the ground, and in the air, during the coming flying season.

We deplore the fact that six of our best members have died within the last year, four through heart attacks and two through accidents. If this casualty rate is maintained, there will be few of us left to realise the day of glory, when all of our vintage gliders are restored and winning their way through the heavens. We feel therefore that it is the duty of our members to instruct the young generation in the art of vintage glider restoration and flying, so that they can continue the struggle for vintage gliders after we are gone.

The 10th International Vintage Glider Rally ... to take place during the first two weeks of August 1982, at the former French National Gliding Centre of La Montagne Noire, in the far South East Corner of France. This centre is between Toulouse and Carcassonne, near Castelnaudery, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, and will be a considerable distance for many of our members to travel. However, we can look forward to good French roads, fantastic weather, French cuisine and a beautiful countryside. Above all, we can look forward to French gliding!

The following information has just been received from Marc Bourdon representing Dedale.

"We are certain now to have: an area for tents and caravans, an area for car parking and trailers.
Showers and toilets (there are four of each on the airfield)
One (maybe two) winches
We are still looking for suitable aerotowing aircraft, but it will be easy (we hope) to find them.
The cost of entry should be about 600 French francs per glider and about 50 francs for each pilot, for the 15 days. There are about 11 francs - £1.
Everyone who does not wish to camp on the airfield should quickly write to us, or the Syndicat d'Initiative de Revel and Castelnaudery, for a list of hotels, addresses for rooms, or houses for rent. The area of La Montagne Noire is very famous as a tourist resort and so accommodation should be organized as soon as possible.

Every National Team should think of how to organize an evening. We are preparing one or two of our own. This is very easy in a place where people like to eat (and to drink) well (Cassoulet + vin rouge for instance).
British VGC members are asked if possible to bring a bungee rope, as this type of launch would be popular if there is hill lift on the slope.
There will be no organization for tourist trips, but information will be sent on this to all people who ask for it."

More information will be sent soon.

Marc Bourdon,
Dedale, Rames Moulis, 09200 Saint Girons, France.
So far, from Britain, Ron Davidson - Petrel; Peter Moran and partners - Eon Baby; Simon Davis - Grunau Baby 2b; Chris Wills - Rhonbussard; Francis Russell and partners - FW Weihe 50; Ted Hull - Moswey 4; David Jones - Rheinland(?); Michael Boxall - Olympia 419; Condor 4 - J.T. Richardson, have all signified their intentions of going. Would anyone else who is thinking of taking part from Britain please write to C. Wills. It is believed that there will be teams from Holland Switzerland, Hungary and Germany and, of course, France, taking part also.

Recently a second Information circular and Entry Form and Hotel List has been received by C. Wills, "Wings", The Street, Ewelme, Oxon OX9 6HQ. Telephone 0491 39245. If any prospective entrants have not received these documents direct from Dedale (Rames Moulis, 09200 Saint Girons, France), would they write without delay to C. Wills, who will send them copies of his.

ALL ENTRIES HAVE TO BE RECEIVED BY DEDALE at the above address by the 15th April 1982. Entries received after that date will not be accepted.

Any entry must be accompanied by 1) Photocopy of the glider's Insurance covering the glider for that period (July 31st - August 15th 1982)
2) Copy of the pilot's licence. In the British case, this would mean a photocopy of the FAI United Kingdom Certificate's valid pages.
3) Copy of the glider's Insurance for that period.
4) Copy of the pilot's insurance DHSS Form E.111.

5) The sum of 600 French francs and 50 French francs per pilot to:-

Dedale, 10 Rassemblement International Planeurs Anciens, Societe General Saint Girons.

Entry Form, general information, hotel list and a map can be supplied by C. Wills if necessary.

The GRUNAU BABY MEETING.

For the past two years, successful flying meetings for Grunau Babies have been held in Germany. As we know, the Grunau Baby was the most widely and numerously built of all pre-war designed sailplanes.

This year's meeting will be held over the three days during Whitsun .. from the 28th - 31st May, on the airfield of Schameder in East Siegerland, about 25 kms from Siegen.

Entry cost per aircraft will be DM 40. This is for the whole period and includes camping and a place for a derigged aircraft in the hangar.

Aerotows will cost DM 3.50 per minute, with a 180 hp Morane and also, possibly, a FW 44 "Stieglitz". Winch launches will cost DM 4 each. The airfield is situated in a good thermal area and, should weather allow, easy tasks will be set. The winch launch 'run' is 1,100 metres. There are good facilities for families and adequate sanitary arrangements on the airfield. 10 - 15 entries are expected. The meeting is open also to gliders which are related to the Grunau Baby (i.e. which have Grunau Baby wings) such as "Cumuli"!!! All interested entrants should write to:- Christian Kroll, at his new address:- Konzendorfer Strasse 4, 5160 Duren - Konzendorf, West Germany. It will be possible to continue flying from the airfield during the following week after Whitsun.

Entry forms can be obtained from Christian Kroll (in Germany) or from C. Wills, "Wings", The Street, Ewelme, Oxon OX9 6HQ. Telephone 0491 39245 (home)

OBITUARY

Frank Reeks With great sadness, we have to report that another of our most important and best members has died of a heart attack on 31st January aged 56. Frank started gliding with the Derby & Lancs Club at Great Hucklow in 1946. In 1950, he moved to Farnborough, and, in 1951, he helped to start a Gliding Section of the R.A.E. Aero Club. In 1953, he gave up gliding to sail a "Graduate" dinghy, and the next step was to build a "Caprice" sailing cruiser. In 1976, because of ill health, he gave up sailing and returned to gliding, joining the Midland Gliding Club and the VGC in 1977. He was in the process of building a Grunau Baby in his garage. A thought that he once had: "How about all the Grunau owners holding their own Rally one year".

Frank will be sadly missed by the VGC's organization for not only did he prepare the 3-view drawings for our technical articles, but also the photograph sheets. He was always ready to help and to give wonderful advice.

Following one of the VGC's earlier suggestions, he first built a trailer before starting to repair his badly-damaged Grunau, BGA 963. Then he accomplished a miracle of a repair and had the aircraft ready to be taken to Eric Rolph for its final inspection before fabricing. It would have flown this year.

It is characteristic that almost his last act was to consign our last Newsletter's photograph sheets to the post, where they were almost at once impounded by the recent railway strike.

He was also busy restoring original vintage glider drawings.

We owe it to him to find only the best owner for his Grunau Baby and its trailer.

Graeme Morris. It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of Graeme Morris, who died on Sunday 7th March. He had been happily attending the annual Dinner and Dance of the Dorset Gliding Club, when he was suddenly taken ill, and died shortly afterwards.

Graeme was one of the early members of the VGC and took part in the International Rallies as a member of the T.21C syndicate. He first went solo in the mid-fifties in the T.30A Prefect Prototype, which his syndicate were later to acquire and restore, and still own to this day. Later he was to qualify as a gliding instructor with the Dorset Gliding Club, eventually to become their CFI.

Graeme had been a member of his syndicate for 18 years, and enthusiastically supported their many gliding expeditions. In the early days he logged his five hours duration leg on a visit to Schaffhausen. His "Gold C Distance" came with a remarkable flight from Lasham to Lincolnshire with a Skylark in very difficult conditions. His "Gold C Height" however he always claimed came about by accident, this occurred whilst he struggled to reload and rewind a recalcitrant cine camera at a modest height over Loch Leven in Scotland, when suddenly he found he had entered cloud, and before he could extract himself had gone up through "Gold C Height". It was some time before he found a hole in the cloud, and eventually, looking down through a break in the cloud, was astounded to find that a road bridge had been built across Loch Leven since he was airborne. Eventually he recognised it as the Forth Bridge by Edinburgh. That was his story - and he had the film to prove it.

His most exhilarating flight was one that I was privileged to share in, when we pair flew our Skylarks over the Vale of York in a dreamworld of short coupled standing waves, that towered above us like great breakers in the sky. We climbed and dived through the waves as dolphins playing in the bow wave of some great ship, it was a memorable experience that we shared in that dramatic Yorkshire air, sadly now never to be repeated.

Graeme was our dear friend, and we shall miss him sorely.

C.D.S.

NEWS FROM BRITAIN.

At the London Gliding Club

First to fly after restoration this year was the Flugzeugbau Petera 1944 built Grunau Baby 2b-2 of Geoff Moore, one of our Rally Secretaries, and Ian Carter. The aircraft, resplendent in transparent fabric, yellow wings, with even the ribs and biscuits painted, was rigged amid snowdrifts at Dunstable, for the first time, on New Year's Day. It has since been flown and has been found to handle far better than it did before restoration. The aircraft was previously modified with slightly longer struts which give the wings dihedral. This must annul a little of its wing area. However, now the trailing edge of the wings has been strengthened and covered, top and bottom, with plywood and this should keep the trailing edge true and warp-free for years. The trailing edge has actually been extended with the plywood covering giving the wing an extra ½ ft^2 of area. This, and the fact that the ribs are capped, means that these are probably the truest Grunau Baby wings ever. This should give BGA 1289 a performance to match its beauty.

Also at Dunstable during February 27th was the recently imported (from Aachen) Franich 3 D-5420. This 1951 designed sailplane should have a performance rather superior to that of a KA 13. This was the last sailplane to be designed by the great pre-war sailplane designer, Hans Jacobs. Also we were glad to hear that a party led by Francis Russell and Geoff Butt have been restoring the Minimoa BGA 1639, which was imported from Holland in 1968.
At Lasham on the 6th February, the following vintage gliders were seen.
The T.21b BGA 1254, in excellent condition, which is owned as a 'fun' machine by Les Birch and nine other partners. Its cockpit is open.
The Eon Olympia BGA 1029. This has now transparent doped wing fabric.
The Grunau Baby 2a BGA 1432, which is now fitted with Goeppingen system airbrakes and has its rudder increased in area by a metal plate attached to its trailing edge. This aircraft was originally built in Germany in 1951 by enthusiasts, without airbrakes for simplicity. The rudder's area was increased to improve its side-slipping capability.
John Coxon's Minimoa BGA 1738, was seen in its trailer. At Lasham also must have been the Hutter H.17, restored in 1980 to immaculate condition by Southdown Aero Services, as the Minimoa had been earlier.
Southdown Aero Services' latest creation, the 'new' wings of a Falcon 1 were seen in the workshop. These are now complete except for fabric. Workmanship is of the highest standard. The project is jointly owned by Southdown Aero Services and John Sproule, who is building its fuselage, tailplane, rudder and struts at his home at Shoreham.

A description of the work achieved by Southdown Aero Services for the Vintage Glider Movement would be incomplete without mention of the 1851 Sir George Cayley man-carrying flying replica, a project which was also carried to fruition by John Sproule and Southdown Aero Services. This was a replica of the first man-carrying aircraft to actually fly and it is now on exhibition in a place of honour in the RAF's Hendon Museum.

The King Kite at Coventry.

By the time this is sent out, David Jones, working at prodigious speed, will probably have finished most of the woodwork of this aircraft. It is no longer possible to produce Newsletters fast enough to keep up with his progress.

The Grunau Baby 2 and Grunau Baby 3 of the late Mr. Richardson. We very much regret having to report that these two aircraft, one Swedish, the other German, have both been burnt at the Essex Gliding Club. However, before the awful deed, another Mr. Richardson, unrelated to the first, removed many of their fittings and components. These are advertised for sale, in this Newsletter.

It must be added that these two aircraft, after many years of neglect and being partially exposed to the weather, were probably unsavable by anyone. The late Mr. Richardson's British-built GB 2a is believed to be now owned by a syndicate at Cranwell RAF GC, and the late Mr. Richardson's H.17a is now kept by, and has been worked on, by Dave Almey of Peterborough Sailplanes.

The JS Weihe BGA 448 and the DFS Kranich 2, BGA 1092. We are glad that we can report that these two aircraft are being worked on by Richard Myhill of Dunstable Sailplanes and Dave Almey of Peterborough Sailplanes respectively. However, as both of these men have to earn a living by repairing gliders, the Weihe and Kranich, which were both severly damaged during the 1979 International Vintage Rally at Thun, are spare-time projects which will take some time to complete. Dave Almey has already finished several bulkheads for the Kranich's nose, which had completely disintegrated during the accident.

Correction to the last Newsletter.

Statistics for Airworthy Vintage Gliders in Britain.

In the last Newsletter we stated that 20 vintage gliders are airworthy in Britain which were built during the period 1940 - 45, if one includes T.21's and Tutors.
This cannot be true as almost no T.21's and Tutors etc currently airworthy were built during that time, but were more likely to have been built just after the war during the period 1945 - 1950.
As far as we know, the vintage gliders built during the period 1940 - 45, currently airworthy in Britain are:- 3 JS Weihes, 1 Kranich2, 1 Goevier 2, 1 Mu 13D-3 (all of which were built in Germany and Sweden during 1943) 1 Moswey 3 and at least 4 Grunau Baby 2's, most of which were built by the Flugzeugbau Petera in 1944. This means at least 11 aircraft - not 20 as stated. This brings the total of airworthy vintage gliders from the period before 1945, to at least 29 aircraft. (Not 38 as stated). A further Wren Kite 1, Dagling, Hutter H.17, Minimoa, Scud 3 and Drone from before 1940, and 4 Kranich 2's, a JS Weihe Spalinger S.21 and Gull 3 from the period 1940 - 45, await restoration.
We apologize if we have missed anybody's much loved project out, but we feel that the above information gives some idea of our numbers.
The above information is incomplete without mention of the airworthy Hutter H.17, (BGA 490) and Moswey 4 - Mu 13D-3, and the still to be made airworthy Goeviers 2 and 3, Avia 40p, Krajanek and very many other gliders, which were built just after the war.

Of the above projects still to be made airworthy, we hope that we can look forward to the following aircraft joing the VGC's fleet in the not too distant future:- 2 Kite 1's, 1 Kranich 2, and the replicas King Kite and Falcon 1.

Dutch Vintage Gliders Still Airworthy.

Jan van Beugen has kindly sent us further details of still registered (and therefore, we believe, airworthy) vintage gliders in Holland. These are:-
2 Grunau Baby 2a, PH-152 and 153 (Fokker built)
4 Slingsby Prefects, PH 192, PH-193 and PH 196. PH-198.
5 Goevier 3's, Ph-206, PH-209, PH-210, PH-211, PH 207.
3 Grunau Baby 2b"s PH-212 and PH-213 and one belonging to Neelco Osinga.
3 Skylark 2's, PH-226, PH-227 and PH-231.
15 Rhonlerche 2's.
1 Jugoslavian Weihe, flying in Holland under German registration D-5862
4 Sagittas
1 Grunau Baby 2b, OE-5046, built Grunau 1941. Friedrich Wevers. Hilversum based.
1 Ifjuzag OE-0392. Hungary 1957 built " " " "
1 Olympia Meise. OE-0477. Austrian built Vienna " " " "
1 SG.38. Austrian registered, being rebuilt at Hilversum. Also Bucker based.
1 Berfalke, OE-0477. 1954 built from Vienna. Friedrich Wevers, Hilversum based

Total 41 vintage gliders - airworthy in Holland.

The above Austrian registered gliders have been imported by Friedrich Wevers, and are flying in Holland with these registrations.
His address is:- Randenbroekweg 9, 3016 B D Amersfoort, Holland. Tel:- 033 720431, and we are very glad to welcome him as a member.

The Dutch vintage glider fleet is clearly being built up!

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

Jan Scott writes that his, Mai's and Arthur's main preoccupation this winter has been keeping warm during the coldest American winter of the century.
As he foresaw, Argentinian bureaucracy surrounding the export of Horten 15's from that country has prevented any of them from being moved to the USA so far. Jan has bought the I.Ae 34m, one of two Horten 15 single seaters which were built and which took part in the 1952 World championships in Spain. He also started negotiations to obtain the side-by-side two seater, "Urubu" Horten 15c.(I.Ae 41). Jan reports that a new addition to the vintage fleet at the Scott Air Park is the Slingsby Kite 2 which once belonged to Dr. August Raspet.
He also reports that Ed Maloney and the Planes of Fame Museum have now completed the restoration of the Horten 4a's centre section. Another source suggests that its wooden mainplanes are in bad condition and will be a problem to restore. Also, metal wing tips have to be made as the originals have been lost by a previous owner.

The Smithsonian Institute has no plans yet to restore its 4 severely damaged Horten Sailplanes, but the Horten 9 jet fighter will be restored soon. Bob Storck, producer of Bungee Cord, is to work on it. The Lippisch DM-1 Delta (Darmstadt D-33) research glider, is also there.
A VSA member has just started to restore a 2 seater Baby Bowlus.

GERMAN NEWS.

Klaus Heyn has now finished all the Rhonadler's ribs and has started to build the aircraft's main wing spars. All the other components of the aircraft are finished.

The new Aviation Hall of the Deutsches Museum in Munich is now up, but the interior is not finished. This hall will contain 7 gliders. However, the exhibition will consist also of relatively modern types including the HKS3 and Phoenix, besides the pre-war MU 10 "Milan", "Vampyr", FS-3 and eventually a MU 13d perhaps.

A SWEDISH VINTAGE GLIDING CLUB?

A Swedish Glider Pilot, Bengt Mierander, who used to fly at Lasham during the early 1950's now wishes to obtain a Grunau Baby 2b in order to experience once again with others, the joys of soaring in Sweden from the period just after the war. The Swedish authorities will now allow wooden and old glued aircraft to fly again in their country, judging them to be airworthy on their individual merits. Over 20 years ago they had grounded them all, when a Weihe had come to pieces while being flown by a 20-stone pilot, much too fast. Rather than destroy their aircraft, the Swedes sold most of their Weihes, Kranichs and Grunau Babies to owners in Britain and America. Bengt had taken a large part in organising these sales. Swedish Weihes, Kranichs and Grunau Babies have given, are still giving, British and American glider pilots endless hours of blissful pleasure in the air.

It now seems that changed governmental policy would allow them all back to Sweden to fly, and there is no doubt that some Swedish glider pilots would like them to return.

AUSTRALIAN NEWS

Olympia "Yellow Witch" flies 300 kms triangles. Hütter H.17 - Silver C Distance.

A 14 day camp was held at the site of the Midlands Soaring Club, Bridgewater from 2nd - 15th January. The camp was marked with good fellowship and achievements. 7 gliders took part, although not all of them could stay for the whole period and five was the greatest number on the field at any one time. Bob McDicken flew his Grunau Baby 4 53 kms for his Silver C distance after many attempts. Keith Nolan in Yellow Witch and Ralph Compton in Skylark 4 both did a 300 km triangle (Bridgewater, Birchip - Kerang), the latter completing his Gold C. On the second to last day the H.17 was flown 65 kms by Jenne Goldsmith for Silver C Distance and Bob McDicken completed his Silver C by taking his Grunau 4. Ralph Compton logged 20 hours flying time from 3 launches and from one of these, he took his Skylark 4 to 12,000 ft. The weather during the period was generally poor, with strong, gusty winds preventing the vintage gliders flying on some of the days. Predictably, the weather on the final day was the best, when everyone was packing up to go home. Gliders present were:- GB 3a-Garth Hudson of Melbourne; H.17a - David and Jenne Goldsmith of Gisborne; Olympia - Keith Nolan of Melbourne; Skylark 4 - Ralph Compton of Adelaide (temporarily); Kingfisher - Tom Hinton of Boort; Bergfalke 3 of the Lake Keepit Soaring Club flown by Ian McPhee of Tamworth.

Silver C Distance in a Hutter H.17 - Great Fun! by Jenne Goldsmith

It was the 14th of January, the day before we packed up camp and my last chance to fly Silver C distance in the H17 before it was all over.

The last three days had been so windy that the Hutter had had to stay in its hangar, but this morning dawned with a light south-easterly.

The sky was cloudless but for a small patch of cirrus to the north, and was to remain so all day.

Full of enthusiasm that the day might be on at last, I carefully washed and checked the Hutter and ensured that tiedown kit, map, drinking water, telephone number and money were all on board.

Then the problems started - one after another - with thr borrowed tug. For a while it appeared we might not get into the air at all. How frustrating! All the while, the windsock was lifting toward Boort.

Finally, however, the perseverance of the tug pilots, one of whom was an LAME, paid off and at 15.37 we were lifting away from the ground at last.

At about 1800 feet I released into 2 knot lift but was amazed, on nearly completing a 360° turn, to see the tug in descending attitude, heading back toward the field, but HIGHER than me!

I knew he had seen me go, so immediately suspected he had gone through better lift than I had. On straightening up I soon contacted 7 knots and - whoopee! quick climb to 5700 feet.

With lift diminishing, I set off on track for Boort, passing directly over the home field.

Lift was good and I didn't lose a great deal of height until after passing over the Lodden River. A careful check of drift in each thermal used showed that though it wasn't great it was in the right direction. Very heartening! Soon I was 20 km from home but still couldn't see the huge lakes near Boort because of the haze.

West of Serpentine, things began to come unstuck as the vario needle glued on 8 knots sink for what seemed an eternity. Five and a half thousand feet was being eaten away in very quick time.

Here I decided to deviate west of track to a likely looking thermal producer of a field that also filled the bill as a landing field, having a farmhouse and buildings on its border.

Down to 1700 feet and the field looked all the better to land in, no power lines or any other obstructions, but now the vario needle had at least shifted itself from its 8 knot position and I was feeling some promising surges.

I seemed to do a lot of messing about however, before finally centering "no sink", a couple of times thinking I should give it away and land.

With some relief I watched this strengthen to 4 knots by about 2500 feet and settled into a climb serenaded by the humming rudder cables. The rudder cables always "sing" at minimum sink speed (30-31 kts) but not at faster or slower speeds, and I love to hear it. I associate it with going UP!

Somewhere between 3500 and 4000 feet I was delighted to see Lake Boort and Lake Lyndget coming into view through the murk and began to think that I really would make my goal after all.

The thermal topped out at 6600 feet, my best height for the day. Putting the speed up to best glide (1 in 17 at 35 knots) after leaving the thermal I sat back and enjoyed the scenery for a while as it made its way past.

A couple of likely looking areas didn't fail to produce a thermal during the remainder of the journey, though I did have some periods of alarm as 8 knots sink showed again.

I arrived over my goal, Dr. John Findlow's airfield, to the north-east of Boort and 65 km from take-off, with 4000 feet in hand.

There was still plenty of soaring in the day and I was tempted to stay up for a while longer, but with the retrieve in mind, I just floated about, having a good look at Boort and surroundings before coming in to land at 17.15. Total flight time was 1 hour 38 minutes - all too short.

I was amazed to see a sea of heads in the car when it arrived with the trailer in tow. Such is the outgoing, helpful nature of the people who spent the camp with us that there were no end of volunteers for the retrieve.

There was even talk of two carloads coming at one stage - all this for a tiny glider that only weighs 90 kg!

It was wonderful to share my excitement and joy in my small achievement with such an enthusiastic bunch.

Going home I had the choice of sitting either in the glider cockpit or the "wayback" of the station wagon. I chose the latter

Our last barbecue that night (complete with pavlova!) was washed down with champagne in celebration of all the achievements made during the camp - despite the lack of "booming" weather.

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(In Britain, there is an H.17 which is proving delightful to fly with sensational climbing ability. However, its horizontal capability has yet to be definitely ascertained. This report should dispel some of the doubts. Other H.17's are to be restored in Britain).

"YELLOW WITCH" came second in the National Sports Contest held at Leeton during January. Keith Nolan brought his Olympia home first one day during a 317 km triangle task. Keith completed other tasks also of 180 and 140 kms. Ian McPhee of Tamworth won the 2 seater Championship in the Bergfalke 3. Keith Nolan also flew his "Yellow Witch" at the Mildura Mini Comps during December but was not able to give all his attention to flying as he was also Contest Director, and had to run the event.

"THE UGLY DUCKLING" - Dudley Hiscox

At the time the Allied Armies were landing in Normandy the Gliding Instructors of ATC Central Command were on a course of soaring instruction and experience at Sutton Bank. There, within the more or less deserted hangar of the Yorkshire Gliding Club, was to be seen a dismantled side-by-side two-seater glider obviously of recent construction. Whatever was it and where had it come from?

Persistent inquiries elicited the sad story of how Fred. Slingsby had been asked by the Air Ministry if his Firm could produce a two-seater for the training of ATC Cadets. Accordingly and in due course, not one but two such machines were built. One was a tandem seater using Tutor wings and the other was a side by side design, to all intents and purposes a blown-up Grunau Baby, Göttingen wing section and all!

The Air Ministry had the machines test-flown by "experts" who reported that the fast flying tandem was reasonably suited for the purpose, whereas they decried the other two-pew as quite useless, stating that it sank like a brick. To add insult to injury "Sling" got rapped by the Ministry of Production for wasting labour and material and who further stressed the fact that he was their slave and only from them should he take directions. Nevertheless the tandem eventually went to Farnborough for structural tests when the Tutor wings proved to be almost too strong for the job. The over-grown Grunau was hidden away in the YGC hangar, being denied even space and warmth of the Kirbymoorside Works.

The war over and the London Gliding Club about to start flying again at Dunstable I remembered that dismantled two-seater up in Yorkshire and asked "Sling" to let us have the use of it to help us get started. He agreed to let us fetch it so long as we promised not to write afterwards telling him what a monstrosity he had produced. There was a good soaring wind on Dunstable Downs the day we rigged and checked out the "Ugly Duckling". "Sling" got a letter from us all right, but not in the tone he expected. We informed him, in glowing terms, that his big Baby was a honey; a splendid soarer with reasonably well-balanced controls and that we wanted to buy, not borrow it. Everyone was delighted with the acquisition. As might be expected its high-lift wing section gave it the usual poor power-of-penetration characteristic of most pre-war gliders. It seemed apparent that the test pilots sent by the Ministry had flown the side-by-side machine too fast, treatment that the tandem survived. This tandem became the T31 and was issued to the ATC Gliding Schools.

In the meanwhile Slingsby's Works thought up improvements to the side-by-side model and evolved the world-renowned "Sedburgh" or T21.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE GULL 1's

The following letter was received by C. Wills from Phil Butler, who edited all three editions of the Merseyside Aviation Society's excellent publication "British Gliders".

"Re the VGC's Newsletter No.42, and the notes on the Gull 1 now in Australia. This was the prototype, and was owned by Dudley Hiscox. BGA records show that it was first owned by Dudley Hiscox but later, it was returned to F.N. Slingsby, presumably immediately prior to its disposal to Australia. I have no record of Dudley Hiscox owning, or part-owning, any other Gull 1, although he owned the Kite 1's BGA 239, and BGA 310 at various

times (and post-war, the Chilton Olympia BGA 434, as you state in the article).

The details of the "Blue Gull", I would also treat with some caution. The aircraft which was crashed in August 1965 had the identity RAFGSA 180. This glider is shown on page 28 of my "British Gliders" edition 3. (The photograph was taken at South Cerney in May 1965). At the time it was taken, it had an orange fuselage and cream wings and tailplane. John Whitworth's date for the accident is confirmed by RAFGSA records for this glider, which state that it was 'written off' in August 1965. The problem is that the origin of RAFGSA 180 is not known. Although it may have been BGA 380 (The "Blue Gull" of the cross channel flight), there are two other possibilities. One is that it could have been BGA 379, which was sold to the RAFGSA in 1953. The second alternative is that it could have been the glider with the RAF serial number VW 912. This was badly damaged in an accident on 7.5.51 at Lasham? but may have been rebuilt by the RAFGSA. The RAFGSA had at least 2 Gulls (nos. 150 and 180). To further complicate the picture, the Royal Scottish Museum's Gull 1 is BGA 902, also of unknown origin. I am responsible for the erroneous tale that it was VW 912 and BGA 379. It may, or may not, be one of these, but it can not be both!

For the record, the owners of the Gulls were:-

BGA 334 - D. Hiscox, then F.N. Slingsby.... to Australia (Dr. Heydon)
BGA 348 - Derby & Lancs GC --- Fate unknown.
BGA 350 - Midland Gliding Club
BGA 353 - W. Liddell ... Ulster GC (Northern Ireland)
BGA 377 - Espin Hardwick ... fate unknown
BGA 378 - W. Coleman, then A. Binfield - Derby & Lancs GC - Hugh Wheatcroft - H. R. Watson - R.P. Green and Richard Wade - Tony Smallwood.
BGA 379 - London GC. 1st post-war C of A 16.10.46 (still with London GC.) To Royal Engineers' GC. Sold to RAFGSA. Last C of A expired 1.9.53.
BGA 380 - "Blue Gull". D.F. Greig & G. Stevenson - Smith Arnold and Lee syndicate - R.H. Pilcher and A.R. Driessen. Last C of A expired 24.7.53.

Now the mystery ships!

RAF serial Number HM 591. Taken on Charge 11.12.42. "Returned to Phillips & Powis Aircraft Ltd". No other details.

RAF Serial No. VW 912. At census of 19.3.47, this aircraft was at 31 Gliding School, Usworth.

It can not be BGA 334.....1.4.48 at Slingsbys for repair
- " - BGA 353.....10.9.48 HQ Reserve Command
- " - BGA 378.....3.6.49 Slingsby for repair
- " - BGA 379.....10.8.49 Glider Instructors' School Detling
- " - BGA 380.....28.8.50 87 GS Weston Super Mare
- " - BGA 349 or 350 23.2.51. Central Glider Instructors' School Detling.

Therefore, it is probably BGA 348 or 377 ... 29.10.51 Re-assessed as scrap (But this does not rule out a rebuild)

RAFGSA 150 .... Crashed at Walton 13.5.53. Could be VW 912 rebuilt or BGA 379 or BGA 380. Dates of sale of the latter two may well have been prior to expiry of the last BGA C of A.

BGA 180 ... Details as overleaf, up until accident in August 1965.

BGA 902 ... 1st BGA C of A - May 1959 with the Aberdeen GC - D. Heyhurst - to Museum f Flight in 1971 (donated by R. Wade). Could be one of the following:- BGA 348, 377, 379, 380 and/or VW 912... and or RAFGSA 150.

All very confusing!

Phil Butler has asked us to publish the above information in the hope that one of our readers could add something that would clarify the confusion.

The above letter confirms that Phil Butler, one of the greatest experts in the land, who has produced such a marvellous reference book as "British Gliders" is as confused as most of us are in tracing some pre-war built gliders which were impressed by the Military during the war, then often losing their civilian identifications for ever. Where there were only one or two of a type in existence in Britain before 1940, it has been possible in most cases to trace their pre-war numbers and thus, one can establish most of their life histories. Although, in the case of the Rhönbussard, BGA 337, its pre-1946 Log Books have disappeared. As the aircraft was imported in to Britain during 1937, receiving its first BGA C of A in April 1938, almost all its first ten years of life is now unknown. However, where nine of a type were built, such as the Gull 1, their military impressment, causing them to be issued with military numbers, replacing their BGA numbers has rendered the tracing of their entire individual life histories very difficult. We are very grateful to Phil Butler for making available to us such a wealth of information on Gull 1's.

WARTIME GLIDER PRODUCTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

The following information has been kindly sent by a contact in Czechoslovakia. Only a portion of the letter has been translated.

"Details of aircraft production during the period of German occupation from 1939 - 1945 unfortunately are not in the accessible archives.
The firm "Petera(Peter) in Hohenelbe(the proper name is Vrchlabi, and the town was first occupied in 1938), built the Grunau Baby 2B. I hope in this case to discover something perhaps, because in 1946 I flew a Grunau Baby built by this firm.

Concerning the production of the Kranich 2 by the firm of Benes and Mraz,** 1630 of the type were built. In 1948, I flew as a pupil in one of these aircraft.

When I was in Kralrupy, I found there a Minimoa which our first weather expert J. Forchgott flew to 5,800 m height during July 1948.
After 1945, about 5 Minimoas found themselves in Czechoslovakia. Some in Kralrupi ... others in Brünn (Brno) and Slovakia.

I have now further details of the Grunau Baby production at the firm of Petera. 830 Grunau Baby 2's were built there. Also the firm of Eger in Cheb (Eger) built the GB 2b but later had to finish parts for the Heinkel 219 "Uhu" night fighter. I don't know any more.

Soon, I will send you the magazine Leteckvi & Kosmonautika with articles describing the aerobatic sailplane Lunak LF 107, the Lunak LF 207 "Laminar" the Soviet sailplane Udernik and the Czech 1935 Motorglider "Grey Wolf" (Sedy vlk - recently restored).

The firm Petera built also during 1944/5 parts for the Arado trainer and Arado 234 twin jet bomber and also, later, parts were delivered to the firm of Spreewerk at Kratzau".

* Kranichs built by the firm of Mraz have also the address, Chotzen, Bohmen, (Bohemia) on their nameplates. We have no idea what the post 1945 Czech name of Chotzen is, or whether the firm continued after 1945.

** At least 4 Grunau Baby 2b's built in 1944 by the firm of Petera are still airworthy in Britain. Two of them are at the London Gliding Club at Dunstable. One of them BGA 1289, has just been magnificently restored by Ian Carter and Geoff Moore, one of our Rally Secretaries, and the other, BGA 1910, was flown on several notable cross-countries during 1980 by Andrew Humphries.

THE ELFE 1

We have hitherto published technical articles on sailplanes owned by our members or on gliders which have distinguished themselves by breaking records. Some gliders are quite remarkable from the technical point of view and also deserve to be described. The first Elfe's belong to this category. They weighed only half as much as their pilots and yet had good gliding angles at low and high speeds. Should this not be sufficient to warrant our attention, we can add that the three that were built still exist. Two of them, in good condition, are in Switzerland, and the third is in South America.

It is surprising that a considerable amount of publicity should have been given to the Darmstadt D.28 "Windspiel" which had an empty weight (with parachute) of 56 kg, a wingspan of 12m and a max L/D of 1/23, and very little attention to the Elfe, which had an empty weight of 43 kg, a wingspan of 9m for the same glide angle as the "Windspiel". This may be due to the fact that the first "Windspiel" flew in 1933 whereas the first Elfe flew only in January 1939 when the clouds of war already hung over the horizon. The fact that the flight took place in Switzerland might not have favoured the plane's publicity. However, Swiss pilots who visited England after the war did bring stories of the incredibly minute sailplane that could be carried over the mountains to flying clubs by three men. Yet nobody in Britain had ever seen photographs or drawings of it until recently.

During the 1930's, the Swiss gliding movement was fortunate in enjoying the services of first-class designers such as Jakob Spalinger, August Hug (designer of the Spyrs), the Mueller brothers (Mosweys) and Werner Pfenninger (the Elfes). The latter was so remarkable that after having produced the world's second laminar-flow profiled sailplane in 1946/47 (the first being the unsuccessful Horten 4B tailless of 1944), Pfenninger emigrated to work for an American aircraft company, leaving his designs to be developed by Alfred Neukom in Switzerland.

We must however return to the first Elfes: (the 1939 and the 1944 prototypes. Both still exist but there are no plans to make them airworthy as pilots are usually not light enough to fly them, nor are modern tow planes slow enough to tow them. The machines are often exhibited at various institutes and public places.

The first prototype was designed by Pfenninger in 1938 and built by R. Saegesser, F. Niederhauser and P. Schenkel during the same year. It flew at the beginning of 1939. It was designed to meet the following requirement Good manoeuverability (especially initial manoeuverability); a wide speed range; the safest possible stall characteristics; a good max L/D and the lowest sinking speed. The wing profiles were specially developed by Werner Pfenninger.

As the design embodied several new ideas, there was a risk that something .. might prove wrong. To minimize that risk, the wingspan was reduced to 9 metres. This allowed great strength and lightness through a careful construction. The wings weighed only 9 kgs each! Because of the small wingspan, the full-span ailerons and the rudder were very effective. Through careful aerodynamic design throughout, a max L/D of 1 : 23 was achieved despite the small wingspan. The wing was fitted with a full-span aileron which worked also as a lift flap. As there was a gap between wing and aileron, both surfaces worked as wings independently of each other except at low speed or at extreme control deflections, when the gap acted as a slot to keep airflow down over the aileron/flap. Designers refer to this system as a double wing. It was also used for all the control surfaces (rudder not included) of the Berlin B.6 sailplane and in all Junkers designs (excepting the Ju 88 which was designed by two Americans on loan to Junkers and therefore reflected much American influence). The aileron/flaps which connected automatically during rigging, could be lowered between 8 and 10 degrees to improve the aircraft's slow flying capabilities. For fast flight, the flaps could be raised 4 degrees. The double wing lent itself especially well to thin profiles and, to ensure that the Elfe could have such a profile, its wings were strutted. The extra drag caused by the struts was minimized by their being auxiliary lifting surfaces.

The inner wing was swept forward, allowing the pilot in his spacious cockpit to lie back and still have good visibility. Had the wings not been swept forward, the pilot, centered ahead of them, would have caused the aircraft to be nose-heavy because of the ultra-light tailplane and short tail arm. The outer wing was slightly swept back and the wing tips inclined downwards to give the flap/aileron ground protection. Particulars of the wings are: a double-T main spar with a torsion box ahead of it covered with 1 mm and 1.2 mm plywood. The largest depth of the main spar is 55 mm at the strut/wing connection points and the spar depth is 17 mm at the wing roots!

Flying: The aircraft's flying characteristics, manoeuverability and performance came up to the highest expectations. The controls were extremely sensitive to their slightest movement. In slow flight, with flaps lowered, the Elfe could stay with almost every other machine. Clean, or with slightly raised flaps, the gliding angle seemed remarkably flat at speeds between 70 and 90 kph.

Weights: The first Elfe could carry a load of 80 kg (for an empty weight of 43 kgs). The fuselage and the rudder weighed together 21 kgs. The wings weighed 18 kgs. The struts weighed 2.5 kgs and the tailplane 1.5 kgs.

A second Elfe prototype built in 1944 had a span of 10.5 m and an empty weight of 65 kgs. The max L/D was 1 : 24. These weights did not compare favourably with those the "Windspiel". This 1944 Elfe, which is referred to as the Elfe 2, could carry a load of over 95 kgs. It was recently found in a cellar in Aachen.

The Elfe built in 1946/47, which is also sometimes referred to as the Elfe 2 (but might be the Elfe 3?) had laminar flow profiled wings. It crashed during one of its first test flights as a result, we believe, of tailplane flutter, but the design led directly to the later Elfeswhich were built in wood and had a different fuselage. However, the 1946 Elfe, which had a 16 m wing span, gave promise of a max L/D in excess of 1 : 40!

(The above information was obtained from an article by Werner Pfenninger)

A letter received recently from Friedrich Fischer of Oberdorf 42, CH-9043 Trogen, Switzerland, mentions that a Karl Huber did have information on the Elfe 1, but unfortunately it was destroyed in a fire at home. Herr Huber related how he had flown the Elfe 2 and also mentioned the Elfe 1. He said that the aircraft had not been easy to fly because of its flaps. However, for its small size, it had truly amazing flying characteristics, but its minimum sinking speed must have been considerable.

FOR SALE:

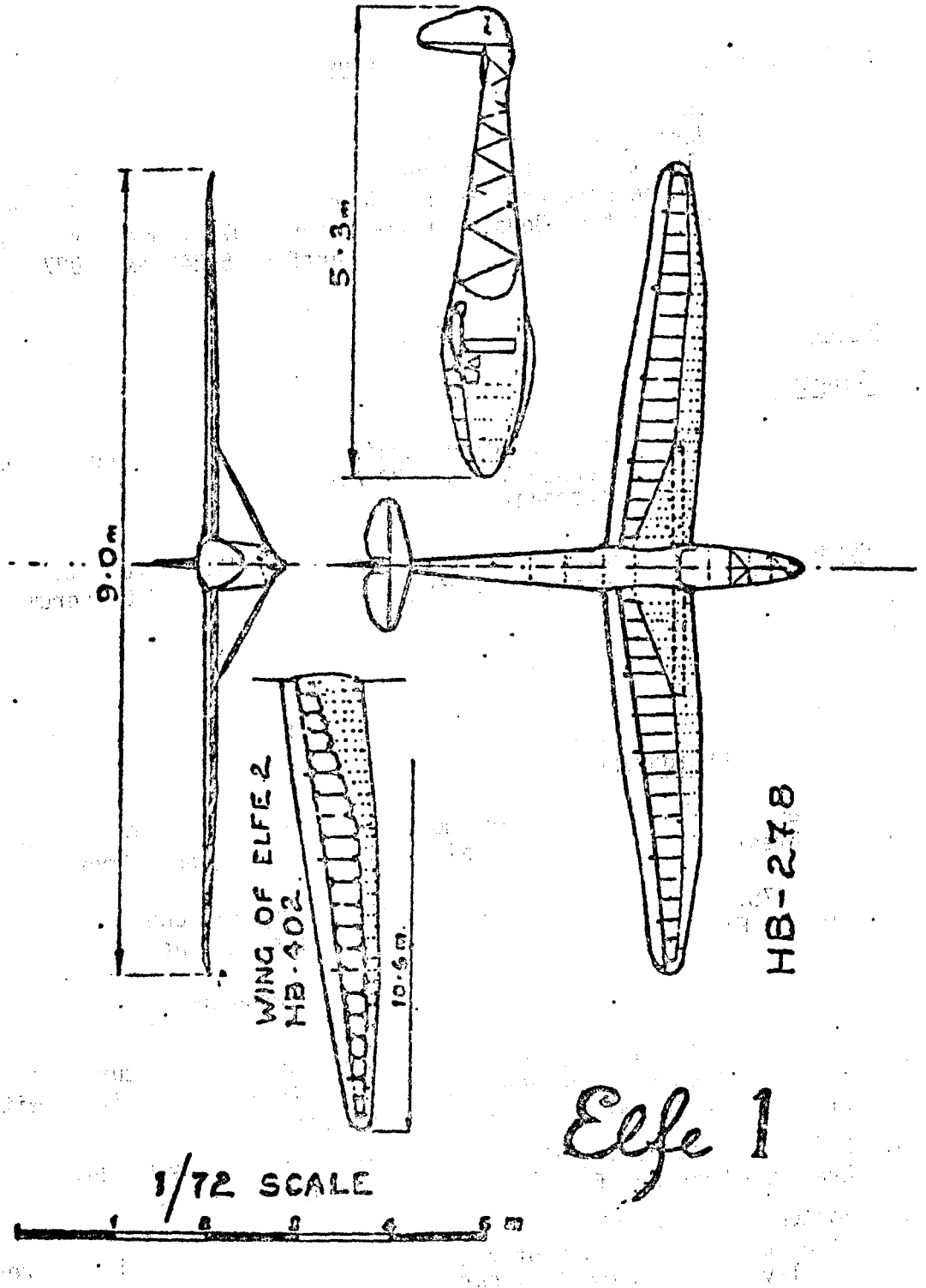
Grunau Baby 5 (2 seater). Karl Steindorf, Albach Strasse 36, 5520 Bittburg, West Germany.

Grunau Baby 2b BGA 963, (needs fabric covering still) and new closed trailer. Aircraft was being lovingly restored. Only the best owner will be accepted. Aircraft and trailer can be viewed at Lasham. Offers to:- Beryl Reeks, "Ashlett", Rowton Bridge Road, Christleton, Chester, Cheshire. Telephone: 0244-35001.

Rodi Morgan Collection. Kite 2 + Open trailer.
Fauvette + Closed trailer.
Castel C 25s 2-seater, without trailer
Rhönbussard BGA 395, without trailer.

Offers to:- Billie Caldwell, 14 The Towers, Grand Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex. Telephone:- 0903 40418(Home) or 024353 (work).

Parts (fittings for a Grunau Baby 2b from a 1942 Flugzeugbau Petera built GB 2b-2. Richard Eckhof, Leipelstrasse 2b, 2102 Hamburg 93, West Germany. Richard Eckhof has seen in Aerokurier that one of our members needs parts. He has for disposal:- 1 joy stick with torsion tube and bearings. Airbrakes + push rods and fittings. Release circuit (without release). Rudder perals and all fittings for the rudder. Tailplane fittings + struts etc. Tail skid fittings + tail skid. Aileron fittings, left and right etc. Various Elevator circuit fittings. Also those for the fuselage and wings + new bolts. Strut fittings, wing/fuselage. Horn bearing in fuselage (trim fittings). Wind screen, Struts, Instrument Panel, Baragraph compartment door, head rest cushion. Hand hold fairing (small defect). Parachute container backrest (Aluminium).



This three view drawing has been reproduced from the smallest original drawing, which had few details. For the details, photographs and photocopied photographs, kindly sent from Switzerland, were used. However, as these were only faintly revealed, they may not have been drawn accurately. We apologise for any inaccuracies.

FOR SALE: (continued)

Grunau Baby 2b and Grunau Baby 3 fittings.

These were removed from the two aircraft which were destroyed recently at the Essex Gliding Club. The fittings plus the GB 2b's rudder (can be seen at the LGC, Dunstable) can be obtained from:- John Richardson, 72 Manor Road, Caddington, Beds. Tel:- Luton 24075 (home) or at work: Hartford 54242 ext.5027.

WANTED:

Slingsby Tutor

Airworthy or needing repair. Offers to: Friedrich Wevers, Randenbroekweg 9, 3016 BD Amersfort, Holland. Tel: 033-720431.

Grunau Baby 2b if possible with trailer (closed). Offers to Bengt Micrander, Carin Bjelkes Vag 13, 443 00 Lerum, Sweden.

Captions to Photographs

The Elfes 1 and 2 - as they are now. Left to right... Top to bottom. The lightest high performance sailplane ever designed. Empty weight - 43 kgs.

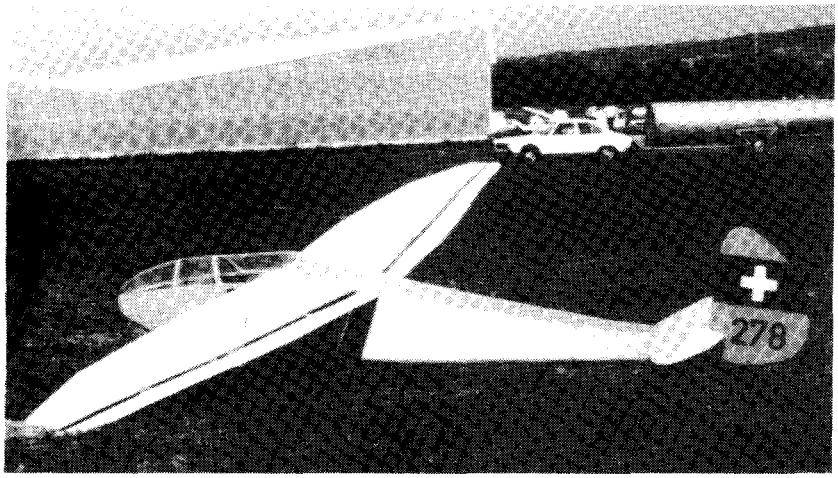
1. HB. 278. After restoration by Bernhard Meyer-Michel Note: Fabric covered rear fuselage. First flight early 1939.

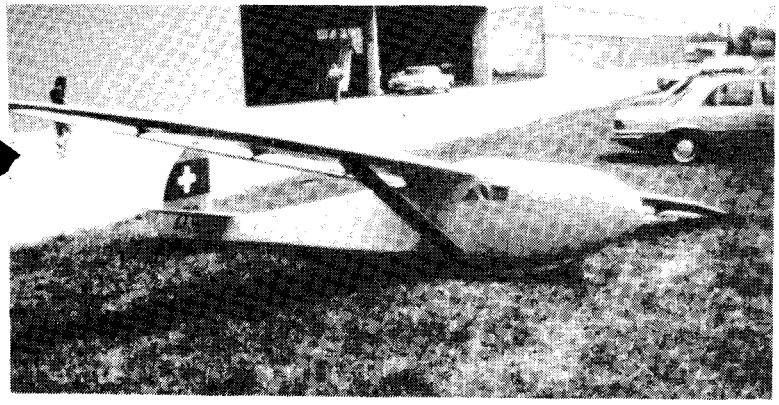
2. HB.278 Elfe 1 showing wing/flaps and aerodynamic, lifting surface, struts. 9 meters span.

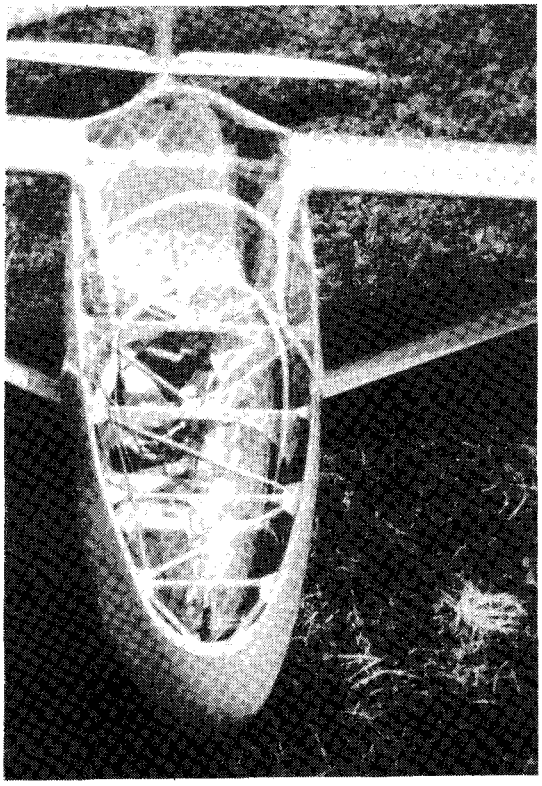
3. HB 278 Elfe 1. Showing nose and the girder structure which is typical of most of the fuselage. The Elfe 1 can be lifted with the man under the skid holding it up with one hand!

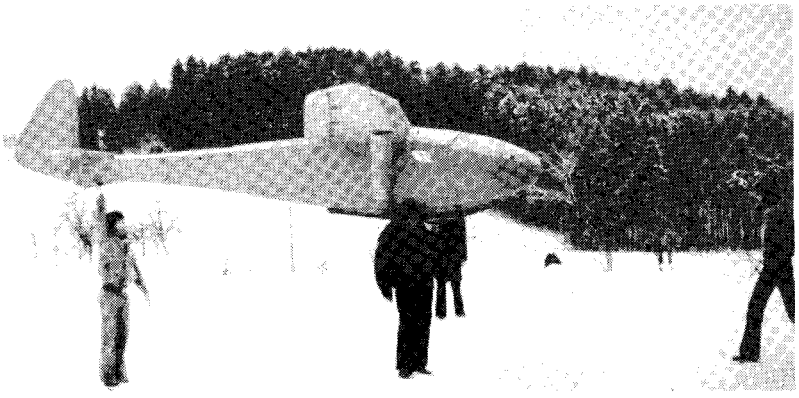
4. Elfe 2. built during 1944 with 10.6m. span. Empty weight - 65 kgs. Even the heavier of the two Elfes can be 'carried'.

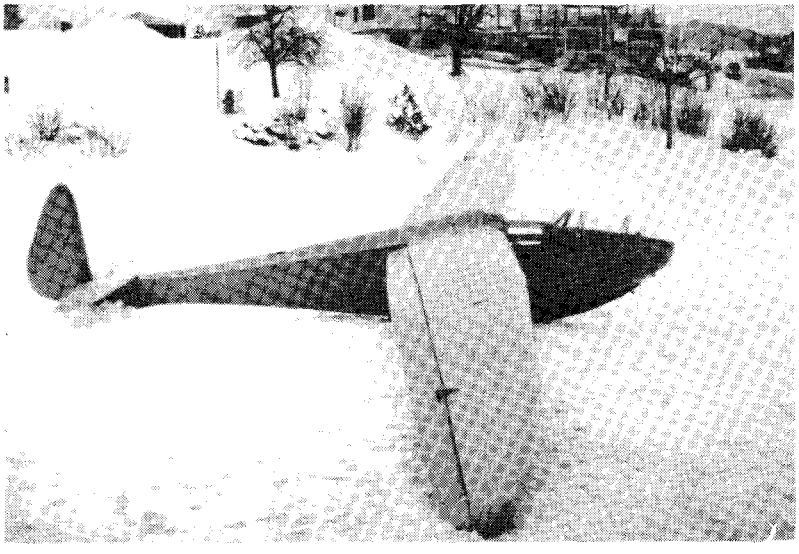
5. Bottom. Elfe 2, HB-402 in the snow. Note symplified shape of aileron flap, compared to that of the Elfe 1. This aircraft is at present displayed, suspended in a Cafe.

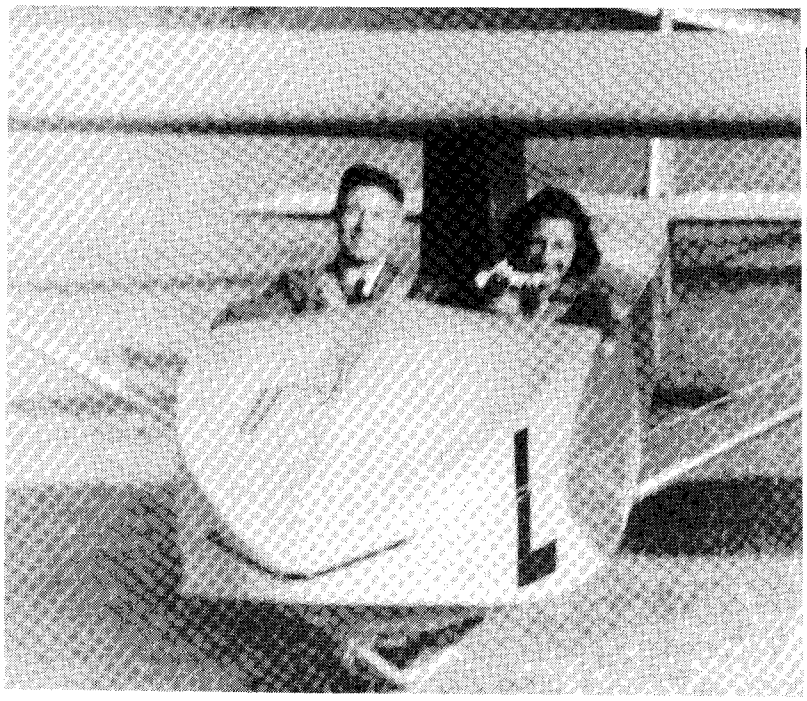

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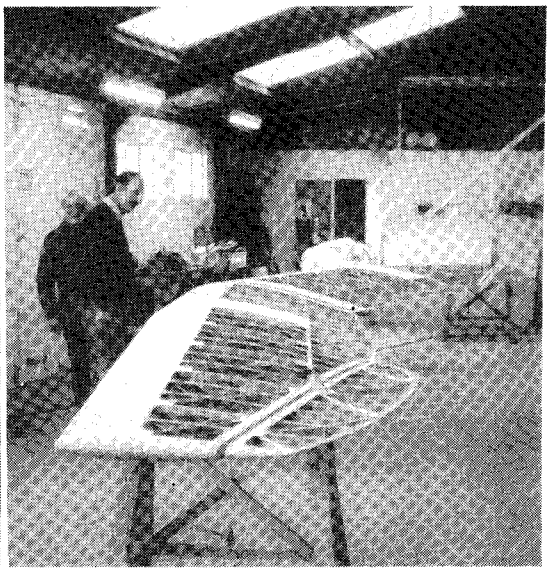


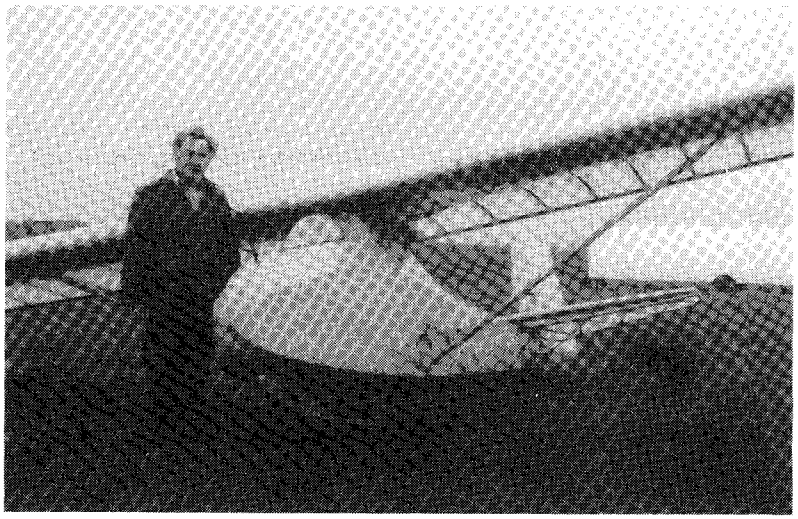


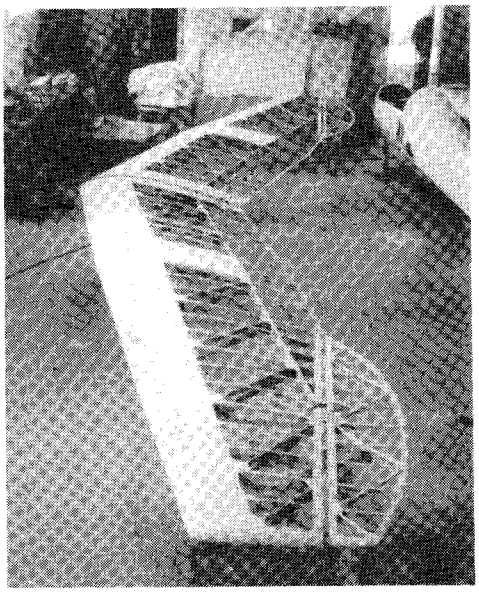


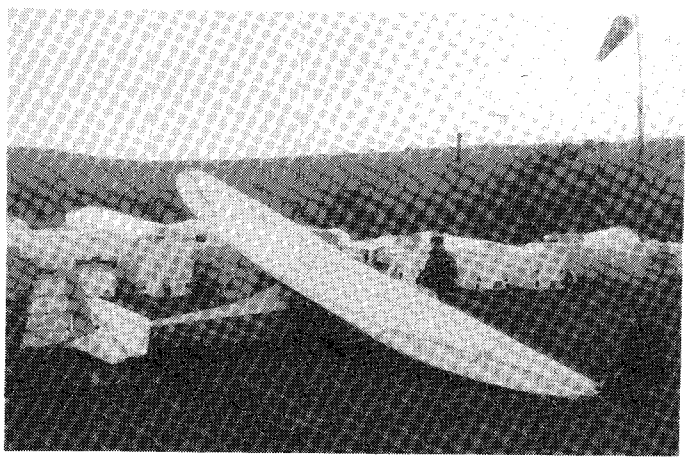


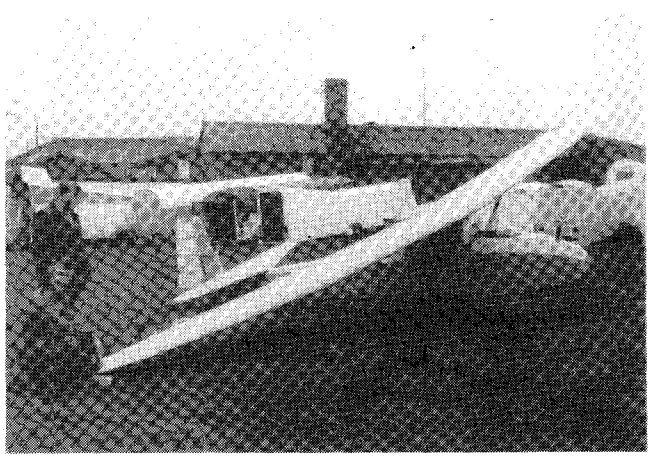












Captions to Photographs.

Left to Right. Top to Bottom.

1. Top. Dudley Hisxoc, the then Chairman of the London Gliding Club, takes his wife and three year old daughter, Marilyn, for a flight in the T.21A. This photograph is believed to have been taken in August 1946 during the London Club's August Meeting, which many members attended.

2. Top right. Frank Irving and Ken Fripp with the wings of the Falcon 1. This replica of the first type ever produced by Slingsby Sailplanes in 1931, is being built partly at Southdown Aero Services Ltd. at Lasham, and partly, by John Sproule in his garage at Shoreham on Sea. Frank Irving has assisted with stress calculations to ascertain whether the Falcon is strong enough for aero-towing.

3. Our Rally Secretary, Geoff Moore and his 1944 built Grunau Baby 2b which he, and his partner, Ian Carter, have just immaculately restored. This aircraft, BGA 1289, was the first VGC glider to have been finished and flow this year. It was first rigged, but not flown, on New Year's Day, amid snow drifts.

****

An Informal Vintage Glider Rally is to be held at Lasham during the last two weeks of July this year.
Any of our members wishing to attend with their gliders should write to:-
Collin Street, "Badger Lodge" Redlands Lane, Ewshot, Farnham, Surrey.
Tel:- Aldershot (0252) 850526.
A special temporary membership fee of £10, has been agreed on, for members staying only a few days, or for the whole fortnight. The normal temporary weekly, membership fee is £18.
Collin will be having to charge £1.00 extra for administration, which will bring the entire entrance fee to £11.00 only. Standard Lasham launch rates by auto or aero tow will apply. Any balance left over will be sent to the 'Rodi Morgan Commemmorative Rally" administrators.
Lasham extends a warm welcome to any VGC members who can be present.
The Rally will be open to especially those who for some reason can not get to the 10th International Rally in France.

STOP PRESS

German News.

An Oldtimer Gliding Club on the Wasserkuppe was formed on the 10th of April 1982 at 1700 hrs. in the Hotel Peterchens Mondfahrt. The announcement and invitation to attend made by Karl Heinz Kellerman, who has attended many of our International Rallies. We believe that he owns a Meise. This is the second Oldtimer Gliding Club, that we have head about, to have been former in Germany, the first, being our old friends and founder members at Munster, who own a Minimoa and Goevier. We wish this new Oldtimer Gliding Club all the luck in the world and hope that we shall often hear from them. It is most gratifying that, on this Holy Mountain of gliding, some of the gliders which made it famous, will be flying.

RODI MORGAN COMMEMORATIVE RALLY and VINTAGE GLIDER CLUB DINNER at LONDON GLIDING CLUB, DUNSTABLE; 5th - 11th September 1982

Introduction.

October 16th to 22nd 1922 the first gliding competition in this country open to all was sponsored by the Daily Mail on the South Downs between Newhaven and Eastbourne to promote soaring flights. On the last day a Frenchman raised the world record to 3hrs.21mins. and an Englishman established a world record for two seaters by flying a passenger for 40 minutes. Sixty years later the major Vintage Gliding event in Britain this year will be the gathering at Dunstable from Sunday 5th to Saturday 11th September where Vintage Gliders that we have preserved and cherished from the past will be flying and admired. By the results of a series of tasks we shall decide the winner of the Rodi Morgan Challenge Trophy, the presentation of this together with other awards will follow at the Annual Dinner Saturday evening.

Details.

There will be no charge for those who wish to camp in the allotted area at the club site. Eight rooms with clubhouse type accommodation two beds to a room are available, it would be advisable to book early by telephoning the LGC on Dunstable 63419 (£2.50 per person per night with linen). A local accommodation list will be forwarded if requested.

LGC temporary membership is £2.00 per day and you need pay on the days that you fly only. Winch launches £2.00. Aerotows £3.20 to a minimum height of 800' and 40 pence per 100' after that. (Winch launches will only be available Sunday, Monday and Saturday). From Sunday to Wednesday the flying will be purely for fun, practice and pleasure with small tasks set. The tasks which count towards winning The Rodi Morgan Challenge Trophy will commence from Thursday to Saturday. Our manager John Jefferies (who gained his Silver C in a Scud 2) has kindly agreed to lend his expertise in helping with the task setting and handicap. We have the keenest brains working on a fair handicap system which will mean that a Prefect will be able to compete against a Mosquy and still have a chance of winning. The handicap tasks will be short cross countries as the weather permits, giving other members of a syndicate a chance to fly. Radios and cameras are not essential.

If the odd day or so is not flyable fear not for only a mile or so away is Whipsnade Zoo, in Dunstable town a sports centre with swimming pool and not far away a golf course. Old Warden airfield which must be number one vintage flying museum in the country is in easy reach together with Hendon RAF museum and Duxford museum. Gliders and pilots will be accepted after the 31st July however, it would be preferred to know by this date that you are coming by using the enclosed entry form. Pilots should check in at the VGC tent upon arrival.

There will be approximately 100 seats for the dinner and it would be advisable to book early if you wish to reserve a place.
Normal clubhouse breakfast, lunch, dinner and bar facilities operate daily.

Programme.

Sunday 5th. All entered gliders should be rigged and parked by 10.30 am for viewing, after the formalities there will be site checks for those who have not flown from Dunstable before and general flying. At midday we hope to have a surprise attraction followed by a brass band.

Monday 6th. Briefing at 9.30am when the task for the day is set and general flying. At 6.30pm we will have a tethered hot air balloon flights for vintage men.