VINTAGE GLIDER CLUB

VGC News

No. 82 Summer 1994



Diary Dates for 1994

- **30 JULY – 5TH AUGUST**
  International Rendez-Vous
  London Gliding Club, Dunstable
  Contact: Geoff Moore
  Tel: (44) 0 442 873258

- **6 – 13TH AUGUST**
  22nd International VGC Rally
  Lasham Airfield, Hampshire
  Contact: Jane Ballard,
  1 Manor Farm Cottages
  Bradley, Alresford, Hants.
  Tel: (44) 0 256 389553

- **7TH AUGUST**
  VGC Annual General Meeting
  Lasham Airfield, Hampshire

- **13 – 14TH AUGUST**
  Midland Gliding Club
  60th Anniversary Celebrations
  Long Mynd, Church Stretton,
  Shropshire
  Contact: Midland Gliding Club.
  Tel: (44) 0 58 861206

- **27TH AUGUST – 3RD SEPTEMBER**
  Annual Slingsby Rally
  and 60th Anniversary of the YGC
  Yorkshire Gliding Club, Sutton Bank
  Contact: John Goodall,
  Yorkshire Gliding Club
  Tel: (44) 0 845 597237

The VGC ANNUAL DINNER will be held on the 24th September at Lasham Airfield, Hampshire. The price of tickets is £12:75. Please include a S.A.E. when booking and state if a vegetarian menu is required.
Contact: Ian Smith, 'Glenvale', 20 Kingsmede, Horndean, Waterlooville, Hants, PO8 9TN Tel: (44) 0 705 592839

VINTAGE GLIDER CLUB

Objectives of the Vintage Glider Club

To promote the international preservation, restoration and flying of historical and vintage gliders; to collect, preserve and publish information about the above; to locate and preserve documents and artifacts connected with gliding; to co-operate and negotiate with government bodies and other interested organisations to ensure that members' best interests are protected; and generally to do all such acts as may be conducive to the objectives of the Vintage Glider Club being met.

Officers of the Vintage Glider Club

President – Chris Wills

Vice Presidents:
Hans Dijkstra (Netherlands)
Willie Schwarzenbach (Switzerland)
Paul Serries (Germany)

Committee:
David Shrimpton – Chairman
Robin Traves – Secretary
Geoff Moore – Treasurer
Mike Birch – Technical Officer
Jane Ballard – Rally Secretary
Colin Anson – Sales Officer
Graham Saw – Advertising

International:
Belgium – Firmin Henrard
Czechoslovakia – Jaroslava Hanackova
France – Didier Fulchiron
Germany – Jörg Ziller
Hungary – Imre Mitter
USA – Jan Scott

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Front Cover: Baker McMillan Cadet II. The oldest airworthy glider in the USA. Photo: Robert Gaines

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Most fortunate readers may already be at the Rendezvous or International Rally, sharing hospitality with friends from abroad or even the vagaries of the British Summer. The last International Rally in Zabraslavice turned out to be everything hoped for including good weather! Both memories and mementoes hopefully remain unshattered.

We are grateful to SAMSUNG Electronics for sponsoring this year's Rally and hope that the media coverage means that our photogenic and interesting gliders will be seen by millions on the television networks.

There have been many changes over the last year. Our Newsletter, the flagship of the Club and focal point for information and views has been updated. It now boasts a colour cover to make it more attractive, encourage more advertising and hopefully increase circulation.

We hope that the cost of improving the Newsletter will be subsidised by advertising revenue. The sale of VGC goods at International Rallies also produces income. The Rallies also produce an opportunity to collect unpaid memberships. However we have reluctantly been forced to increase our subscription rates.

Collecting subscriptions from abroad has always been a difficult task The offers of help from our continental friends to organise the local collection of membership fees brings us one step closer to being a truly International Organisation.

At last year's Council Meeting the Dutch Representative proposed a set of rules under which groups could secure a loan from the VGC Committee to assist in financing an International Rally in their own country. The finance, in the form of a loan repayable within a short period after the Rally, may encourage others to take the financial risk involved in organising such an event.

The Annual Dinner this year was held at Dunstable. Our thanks to guest speaker Tom Bradbury who reminded us of how the weather was forecast before the age of sophisticated computers and how the weather hasn't really changed over the years either, we just talk about about it more.

1994 has seen the introduction of an insurance scheme for VGC members which is proving very successful. Those of you who are inquisitive about the VGC insurance rates but who have not for one reason or other returned the pro-forma sent out with the last Newsletter please do so. By the way, all the syndicate members need to be VGC members to qualify for the scheme.

The Club's own computers were also given a new lease of life and updated to give them even more memory than our own President Chris Wills, whose own is quite formidable.

After considerable discussion it was agreed to stop sending out Technical Articles in addition to the Newsletter but

instead to provide them as part of a VGC service for a realistic but small fee.

The Club rules came up for scrutiny and it was decided that we are in fact a Club and not a Limited Company. Other than this not much else needed to be changed.

Warm thanks to to Jane Ballard and Colin Street who leave the Committee to concentrate on their gliders and an equally warm welcome to Ian Dunkerley and Peter Higby who have offered to take up their places.

The Rally logo has now been decided upon and if you are a T 31 owner then be quick, I have nearly bought up all the stock myself.

Lasham Gliding society has kindly offered to host our annual Dinner in September this year. Bring your glider with you and make a Weekend of the occasion.

An item for for future discussion must be the conduct of a survey of member's needs so that we can ensure that the Club is going in the right direction and serving its members as they would wish.

One obvious advantage of being a Member of the VGC is the free advertising available in the Newsletter. To protect this privilege it has been suggested that members get one free advert per year whilst non members will be asked to pay 12.00 which will be refunded if they decide to join the Club.

Finally, to quote our President, the numbers of restorations of vintage gliders and new projects currently is impressive and more numerous than ever before. In years to come others will see this period as the resurgence of interest in Vintage Gliding.

Current News

THE 22ND INTERNATIONAL VINTAGE GLIDER RALLY

Their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York and Prince Andrew have all expressed interest in the Rally, have regretted not being able to be present at the Opening, and have wished us the best of luck for its success.

More than 60 entries have been received at time of writing (mid May). The oldest entrant will be Jim Stoia's Baker Macmillen Cadet Mk.2, which flew first in August 1930. Indeed it seems that it is the oldest airworthy glider in the World. To reach England, the aircraft is being shipped to Southampton.

HADDENHAM (THAME) does it again... and better than ever before.

This was to celebrate the wartime glider pilot regiment that started its training on Kite I s at Haddenham in 1941. It was also the 50th anniversary of the 1944 D-Day landings in France during which the glider pilots spearheaded the assault. Many of these glider pilots were at Haddenham with us again and to mark the auspicious occasion, the weather for the first time this year became "brilliant" for gliding. The UPWARD BOUND TRUST at Haddenham had been formed to provide cheap glider training for young people and its first instructors had all been wartime glider pilots.

This year, the airfield had been waterlogged and so members of the Upward Bound Trust had done little gliding, if any ... and had spent the time building a new winch with a 250 hp engine.This winch was thrown in to action for the first time during this weekend, and proved itself to be up to the highest expectations. Even although there was a cross wind, the winch launched gliders to 850 ft and managed between 600 and 900 launches per day for the three days.

Owners and Vintage Gliders taking part were:

Bob Boyd	Kite 1	BGA 251.
Tony and Michael Maufe	Kite 1	BGA 310.
Peter Underwood	Kite 1	BGA 400
Peter Warren	Kite 2	BGA 689.
Ted Hull	Scud 3	BGA 684.
Richard Moyse	Prototype Sky	BGA 685.
Ian Smith	Tutor	BGA 1698.
Geoff Moore	Mu 13 D-3	BGA 2267.
M.Wilton-Jones, John Tournier Purple	Tutor	BGA 485.
Upward Bound Trust	Ka-8	BGA 863.
Upward Bound Trust	T.21B	BGA2725.
Upward Bound Trust	T.21B.	
Upward Bound Trust	T.21B.	
Keith Green	T.31	BGA 3229.
	T.31	BGA 3487.

Saturday brought perfect weather which allowed long duration thermal flights in spite of the cross wind winch launches. Two 7/9th full size SE.5as, (one of which had been built by Mike Beach, who was present) and a Stampe dropped in for the evening after a fly-past. A member of the Upward Bound trust, Steve Bonzer was flying one of the SE 5as. A BEECH Staggerwing also flew past.

The wartime troop carrying glider pilots could not have failed to be impressed and many of them had flights in the T.21 s.



Mike Beach and Ted Hull with Ted Hull's reglued Scud 3 at Haddenham. Photo C. Wills

There had been small cumuli to indicate the whereabouts of lift.

Sunday was an even better day. The longest duration flight was by Peter Warren who reached 5,000 ft. The duration of his flight was 4 hrs 16 minutes in his very well restored and instrumented Kite 2 "Percy". Peter Warren flew his Kite 2, 7.5 hours in three flights during the weekend.

Bank Holiday Monday was the final day of the Rally. This had not such good weather, with thermal activity making itself evident with gliders soaring from winch launches at half hour intervals.Tony Maufe flew his Kite 1 6 hours during the three days, landing during Sunday evening at 6.45 PM.

All thanks must go to the Upward Bound trust and especially to

Vernon Jennings and Peter Chamberlain for having organised such a successful event. The wartime glider pilots were going on to an incredible series of events, among which were receptions by Their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh.

HINTON IN THE HEDGES RALLY

A further Vintage Rally was organised by John Smoker at Hinton in the Hedges immediately after the Rally at Haddenham. This was to be run at the same time as a regional Gliding Contest from the 30th – the 8th of May. Hinton in the Hedges is the home of the Aquila Gliding Club which was running the above contest.

The weather had deteriorated at the end of the Haddenham Rally and this continued for the week of the above Rally... with once again very good thermal conditions on the last Sunday. Possibly because everyone was exhausted after the Haddenham event, only two vintage gliders were present at Hinton in the Hedges. One of these was the Olympia 460 BGA 2776 of Denis Sheppard from the Highlands Gliding Club of Lossiemouth-Milltown, Morayshire on the North East Coast of Scotland. He had been collecting his aircraft after being recovered at Marham. The second vintage glider present was John Smoker's own now alas very rare British built Grunau Baby 2. In spite of the poor weather some soaring was had by the 460 with very strong lift into cloud and very strong sink out of cloud. The fibreglass sailplanes of the contest managed out & returns of up to 100 kms on one day. On the last Sunday, four of them went round a 300 kms triangle. Alas, by then, the Olympia 460 at been taken back to Scotland, but the Grunau Baby 2, BGA 277, had some exciting flying. This machine was originally built in a Leeds bedroom in 1936 by Fred Coleman. Because of the size of the workspace, its wings were initially constructed in four pieces. It gained its first BGA C of A in August 1936. During the war, it was 'impressed' but was later returned to civilian use in the Oxford area (Weston on the Green and Haddenham). John Smoker has almost completely rebuilt BGA 277 and it is rather lighter than the standard German Grunau Baby 2Bs.

OBITUARY

Just before we went to press we learned of the passing of Kitty Wills, mother of our President Chris Wills. She will always be remembered as 'the crew' to the great Philip Wills during the 1930s and right up to the 1960s. She was a devoted and loyal wife and member of his team, which enabled epic flights in gliders to be made and so retrieve him from long distances. She was recently made welcome when accompanied to the Kite Owners Rally at Haddenham in May. We pass our deepest sympathy to Chris and his family.

International News

AMERICAN NEWS

From BUNGEE CORD Vol. XX No.I Spring 1994.
Ron Nelson's Two Place "BABY ALBATROSS". The 1992 Frank Gross Restoration Award Winner! by Frank Kelsey as told to Raul Blacksten.

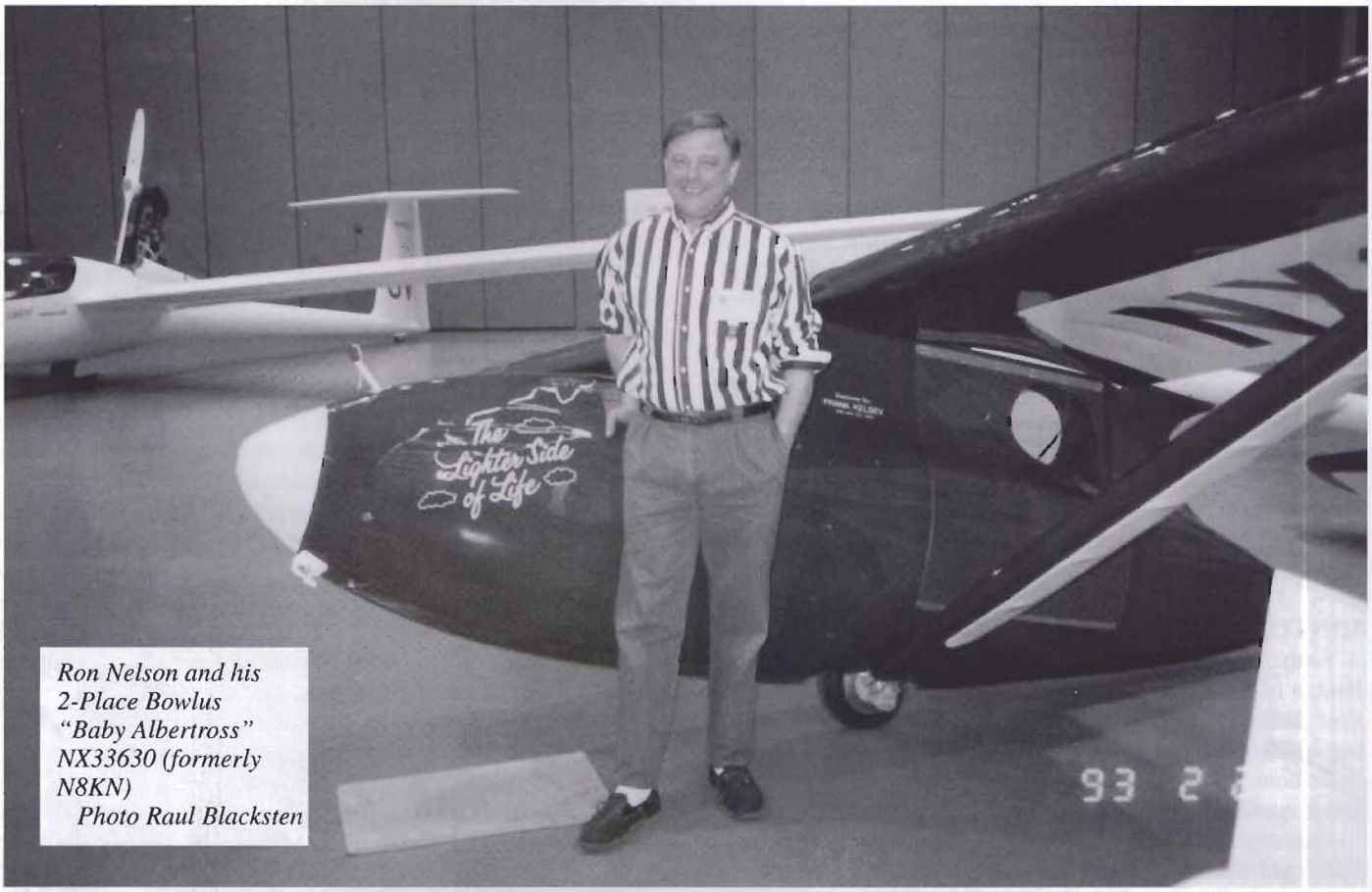
As you may know, the VSA's prestigious 1992 Frank Gross Restoration Award was presented at the Seattle SSA Convention to Seattle's own Ron Nelson for the restoration of his two place Bowlus Baby Albatross. If only Frank Kelsey had lived long enough to see his and Ron's decade old project receive the recognition it deserves.



May 30th 1994, Manning, South Carolina. Dipl. Ing Frank Gross inspects his Bakor McMillen Cadet II design.

About two year's ago sent me a tape about Ron Lawry's and my restoration of the Bowlus Albatross 2. On a portion of the tape, Frank wanders in to a discussion of what is now Ron's Baby. Seeing as how said Baby has now won the GROSS AWARD, I thought that an edited transcription of Frank's comments on the subject may be of interest.

"I have restored three Baby Albatrosses, the last one being the only (remaining two place) Baby Albatross in the world. We used the original one at the factory. It was our demonstrator (and) we'd take people for rides. It did not have dual controls, so you couldn't check anybody out or give 'em dual instruction but you could expose 'em to a little bit of sailplaning. "We sold this particular ship to (Ted) Nelson, up in San Leandro, that built the Hummingbird power glider. He built it (the two place Baby) up from kit, and it had a wheel control in the front cockpit only. When he went to test fly it, he had



Ron Nelson and his 2-Place Bowlus "Baby Albertross" NX33630 (formerly N8KN)
Photo Raul Blacksten

never flown with a wheel control before. As is usual with a person that has no experience with a wheel, he tried to steer (it) directionally, and wound up by jamming the wings in to the ground. He finally cartwheeled the ship and destroyed it.

He took the pieces and brought them to the Bowlus plant and we repaired it. We built a new fuselage, a new boom, a new wing, and he stipulated that he wanted a stick control and that he wanted dual controls, front and rear. Of course the Baby Albatross is very narrow, and with a stick control, you only got some 5 inches of side motion between your knees. This makes the gear ratio on the stick very high and makes the aileron loads unacceptably stiff.

I did the first flight with this ship after we rebuilt it. Took it out to the dry lakes, and did a car tow. Of course it was so miserable to fly with the ailerons, you could hardly control the sailplane with both hands. I told Hawley about this, we only had time for one flight and he didn't seem to want to make one himself, and on the way home we discussed it. He wouldn't accept the fact that the ship was not acceptable, the way the control was built. You'd have to know Hawley to understand that he had a thing about anything that he did. He would not accept criticism, even though it was constructive criticism. This made my job as test pilot very difficult because the Baby Albatross, and later the XBM-5, (the military trainer) had lots of unsatisfactory flight characteristics that (neither) the military or the CAA would accept.

We got back to the factory after dark so I went home and thought about it, and went back to the plant next morning. I went early with the idea of talking to Hawley before the shop started up. His wife, Ruth, said that he was probably half way to San Leandro to deliver the sailplane. I was quite unhappy about this 'cause I knew that this would not be acceptable to Ted Nelson, which it wasn't, and this sailplane had been owned by 13 different people in the 50 years of its existence. You look through the log book entries and everybody that has owned it, has made 2 or 4 log book entries and then they've sold the ship because it was not acceptable the way the controls were built. I told Ron Nelson (no relation to Ted) this when I first saw the ship back in Minneapolis, and he thought that he'd like to have it finished-up more or less original. "Of course,there's several things that you have to make up your mind when you're restoring a sailplane. If you're going to fly the ship, some of the things are (that) most of the ships 50 years ago had very poor or no brakes at all on the wheel. You have to put a wheel in it that has preferably a disc brake, and they are available, and install it. In the way of instrumentation, you have to do other things so that you can do soaring. Modern electronic rate of climbs, for example, and sensitive altimeter etc. which were a scarce commodity in the days when the Albatross was being flown. In fact, there were just a few people around, like Jack O'Meara, that even had sensitive rate of climbs.

Frank used the opportunity of the restoration to correct many of what he saw as defects in the Baby, which included returning the glider to a single wheel control. Frank also installed a dual oxygen system and covered the exposed wood with fibreglass.

Personally, I do not know what good the oxygen system in the back seat is going to be. It is my opinion that no one could ever ride back there comfortably, with or without oxygen. When I sat back there, I could not even latch the door.

Although edited, oral histories and memoirs are presented as personal reminiscences, usually many years after the fact. As such, they may differ in some areas from other accounts and may contain unintended inaccuracies, but assist in the efforts to get at the true history of soaring.

Congratulations Ron and Frank. Well done!

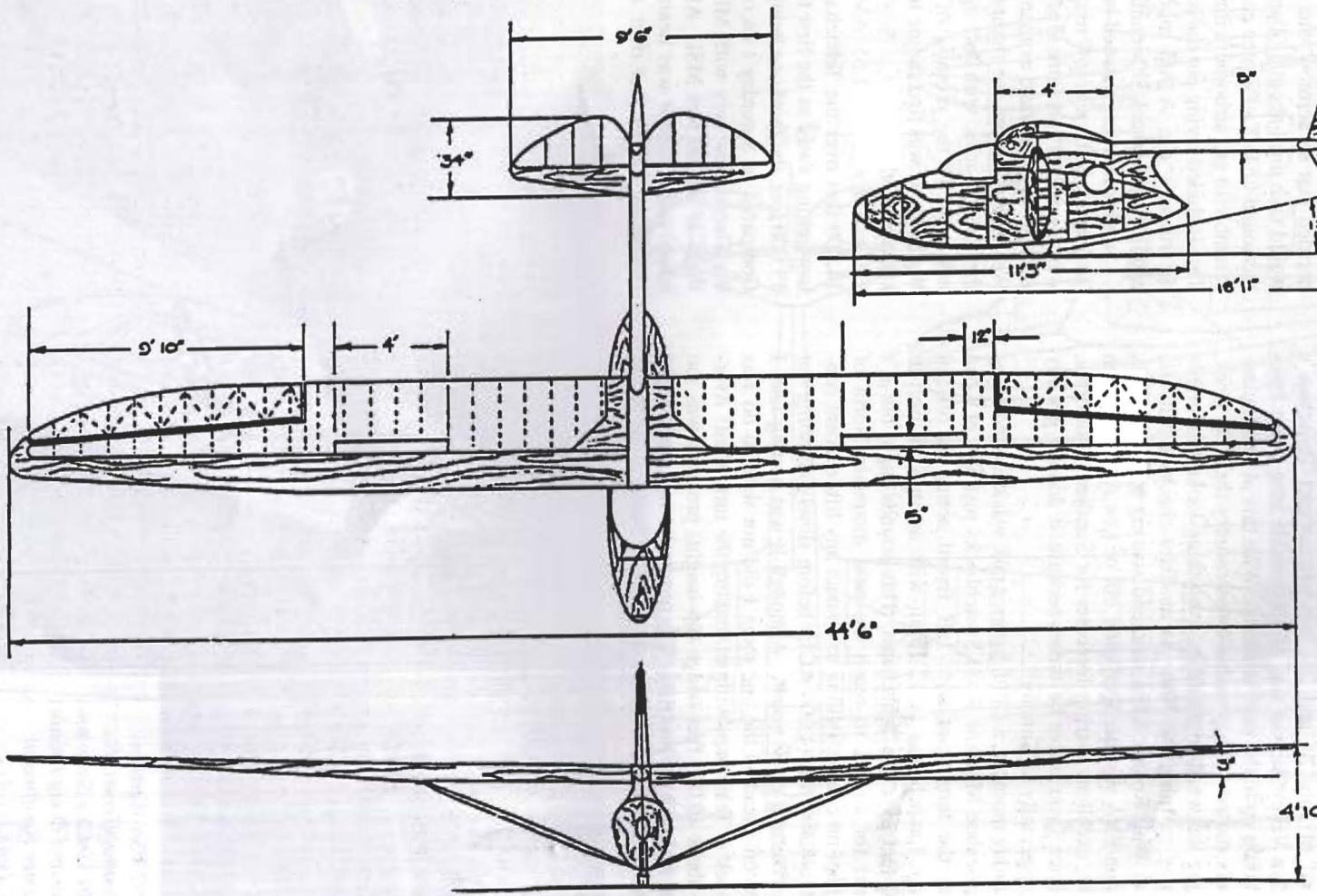
Raul Blacksten

BOWLUS BTS-100 Two Place "Baby Albatross"

Editors Note: There were only two BTS-100s (sometimes referred to as BA-102s) ever completed and flown. The first was built by Hawley Bowlus and Don Mitchell for their personal use. The second was built for Ted Nelson and this is the one that Ron Nelson (again no relation) now owns. Ron's BTS-100 has the serial number of 104, which would imply that at least 4 two-place ships were built or at least planned. There are a couple of possible explanations for this:

- It was reported in THE THERMAL Jan '41 p. 10, that a BA-100 and a BA-102 (this would have been the 3rd BTS-100) were shipped to Bombay, India for the Indian Gliding Association to be used in the British Empire Pilot Training Program. The Indian Gliding Association had a British government contract to train 300 Chinese pilots for Generalissimo Chang Kai Shek. These gliders were said to have been shipped as deck cargo, and thought to have been either water damaged or lost at sea during a storm while enroute.

- When Ted Nelson's ship was returned to the factory for repaires and modification, it is said that it may have been assigned another serial number. This however is just speculation. *-Ed.*



BABY ALBATROSS - TWO PLACE	
DESIGNED BY: HAWLEY BOWLUS	
DRAWING BY: BABY NELSON	
MODEL	BTS 100
SERIAL NO	104
'N' NUMBER	NX33630
TYPE:	TWO PLACE HIGH WING WOOD CONST STRUT BRACED
WING SPAN	44 FT. 6 IN.
LENGTH	18 FT. 11 IN.
WING CORD	48 IN.
AIRFOIL	GO. 535
WING AREA	150 SQ.FT.
ASPECT RATIO	13.2
L/D	20 TO 1
EMPTY WT.	496 (WITH OIL)
GROSS WT.	900 LB.
MIN. SINK	2.25 F.P.S.
MAX SPEED	65 MPH
TOW SPEED	65 MPH
AUTO TOW	55 MPH
POD OF:	MOLDED MONOCOQUE
TAIL BOOM	ALUMINUM TUBE 5IN.065
CONTROL TRAVEL	
ELEVATOR	UP 15° DOWN 14°
AILERONS	UP 22° DOWN 7°
RUDDER	RIGHT 23° LEFT 23°
MAIN TIRE	400-4
MAIN GEAR	ROSENHAN WHEEL & BRAKE

A GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY GOLD BADGE

With a Diamond to Go! by Doug Fronius.

For the past several years, I have attempted to complete Gold Distance in my 1943 LK-10A. Having completed a Silver badge and Diamond altitude in 1988/1989 using the same ship, 1993 seemed an especially significant year to complete the Gold badge during the ship's "Golden" Anniversary. On Sunday, August 1, 1993, a Diamond Goal/Gold Distance flight was completed in California from Tehachapi to Loan Pine and returning to Tehachapi. Covering a distance of 194 miles, it was the fifth attempt at this particular task declaration. The following story relates the unsuccessful fourth and the successful fifth attempts to complete this task.During the weekend of July 24 and 25, the talk around Tehachapi's Mountain Valley Airport was of a favorable long range forecast leading up to the next weekend. With this in mind, planning was started for a possible cross-country the next week. Watching the weather carefully, everything looked favorable on Friday morning the 30th. As an extra check, a call was made to Walt Rogers for a weekend soaring forecast. Walt, who is an FAA weather forecaster out of Los Angeles, often provides excellent soaring forecasts for Southern California. His advice "you better be there, because it doesn't get any better, especially on Sunday!"

Saturday morning, a Gold distance task was declared using the Horseshoe Meadow Road Switchbacks just SW of Loan Pine as the turn point with Jeff Byard acting as official observer. Launch was at 12-15pm with an initial climb to 10,500 feet over the Tehachapis. This sounds high, but it's marginal for an LK to reach the next mountain North of Tehachapi on course. Failing to contact any lift, descent continued to 5,400 feet (1,200 AGL) before slowly climbing out of the hole and on to course. Although it was getting late, I pressed on ahead as the one thing I did not want to do was land back at Tehachapi without making the turn point! Averaging about 10,000 feet (ridge top height) progress was too slow to make up for lost time. The turn point was made about 4:30pm with some excitement at Olancha Peak on the return leg. Olancha peak is a 12,123 foot mountain along the Eastern edge of the Sierras with a dramatic rock face extending at least 4,000 feet high, facing the Owens Valley. Arriving at about 7,500 feet, a slow crawl was made up the face to the 12,000 foot level scraping rocks all the way. After Olancha, a few more thermals remained but were ever decreasing in strength. Abeam Little Lake, a 20 mile final glide was started to Inyokern Airport with arrival height estimated to be 300 ft AGL. There was limited zero sink en route, enough, however, to arrive at the Inyokern at 800 ft AGL. Landing was made at 6:20pm for a 6:05, 167 mile flight. After securing the ship, a phone call was made to Harald Buettner and/or Jeff Byard back at Tehachapi for a retrieve. Assessing the situation, Jeff decided that an aerotow was in order since a trailer retrieve would take until about 1.00am Sunday morning. At 7:15 PM the sound of Jeff's Pawnee came overhead, and we did a mad scramble to get airborne within 10 minutes of Jeff's landing. This included laying out the rope, untying the ship, pushing to the runway, etc. A full moon helped "delay" sunset long enough to land back at Mountain Valley Airport at 8:15 PM.

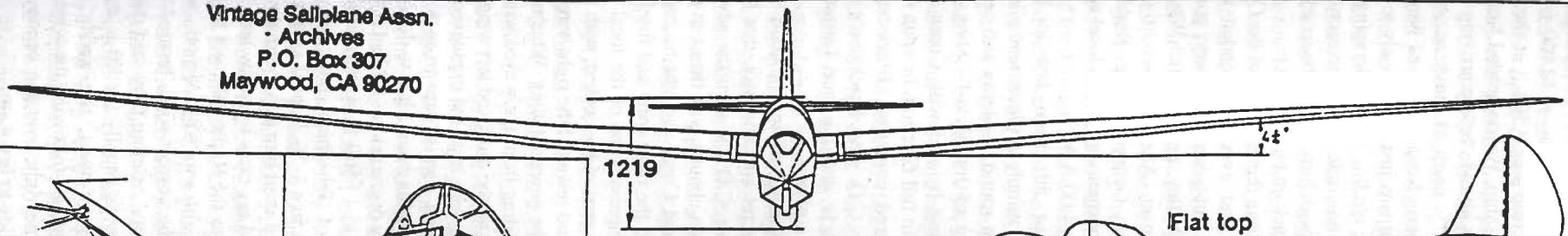
Sunday morning dawned looking perfect for a great day up the Sierras. Jeff's aerotow retrieve was a great help as the ship was assembled and some sleep was had. There were preparations all over the field as many cross countries were planned. We again filled out the flight declaration for the same task to the Switchbacks, with Jeff again acting as observer. A sure indication of the promise of things to come... weatherman Walt Rogers was first in line in his DG-300 "WX" for a 1,000 kms attempt!

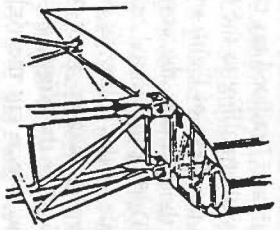
Launch was at 11.55 AM with an immediate climb to 14,000 feet over the Tehachapis. On this flight no time was lost getting away as the first three thermals all went to above 13,000 feet, the third one being 30 miles North and on course! Compared to Saturday's incomplete flight,the trip North up the Sierras was easy with MINIMUM altitude for the entire flight at 10,000 feet MSL. After the turnpoint pictures were taken, radio chatter was heard about cloudstreet altitudes of 16,000 to 17,999 feet over the top of the Sierras. As my



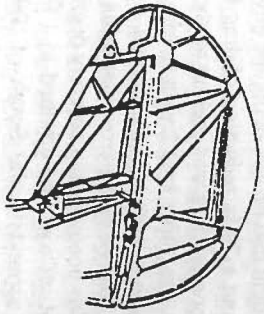
1992 VSA Western Regatta, Hemet, Ca. Best Vintage Sailplane. Bob and Doug Fronius' Laister-Kauffmann LK-10A (TG-4) (Bunny nosed) Photo Raul Blacksten

Vintage Sailplane Assn.
Archives
P.O. Box 307
Maywood, CA 90270

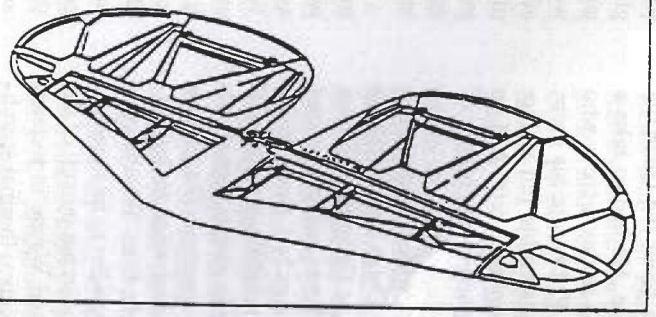


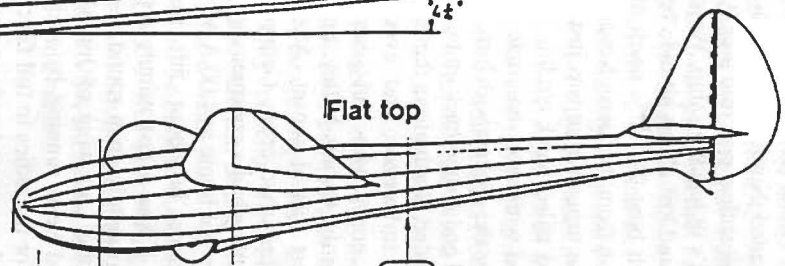


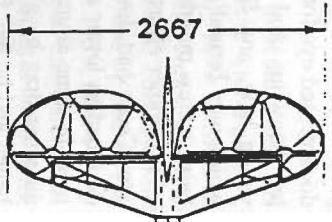
Wing root fittings

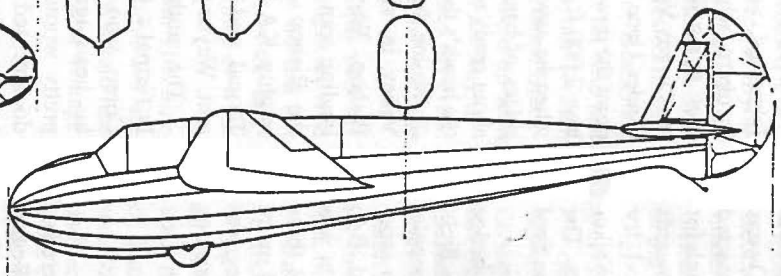


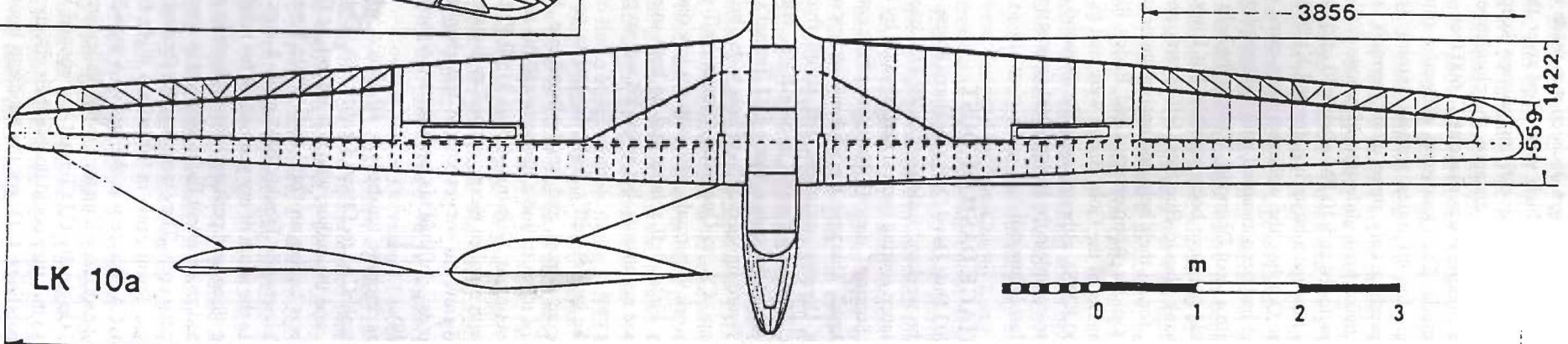
Tail unit details











maximum for the day so far was 14,000 feet over the eastern edge of the mountains, a decision was made to try to contact these cloudstreets, which were West over the high ground. After some conservative flying, always keeping the Owens Valley within gliding distance, the cloudstreet was contacted and soon cloudbase was made at 17,600 feet, good enough for Gold altitude. The cloudstreet allowed a run direct towards Tehachapi for 40 miles without turning (pretty good for 23:1!), needing only three more thermals South of Walker Pass to make final glide into Mountain Valley Airport. The flight concluded at 5:10 PM after 5:20 of flying with the final 10 miles flown at a blistering (for an LK) 80 MPH.

In late October, the welcome news came that Gold badge No. 2063 had been awarded with the completion of this flight along with a Goal Diamond. Without the help of many people, this would not have been possible, but I would like to especially thank Harald Buettner, Jeff Byard, and my Dad, Bob Fronius, for all their help and encouragement. The flight was truly a Golden Anniversary Gold Badge flight as all three requirements of the Gold Badge were met (5 hrs, 3000 metre gain, 300 KMS), although only the diamond distance leg was needed to complete the badge. Next summer, we start working on that last Diamond!

A VINTAGE DASH OF DUST

(The 1993 Dust Devil Dash) by Harry Irvine.

On the weekend following Labor Day each year there is a free distance soaring contest that is put on by RESCO (Region Twelve Soaring Council). The name of the contest is the "Dust Devil Dash". This year, the VSA was represented by four of its Western Division members. Jeff Byard flying his Standard Austria "S", Doug Fronius in his LK-10, Wayne Spani flying his KA-8 and the author, flying C.D. Termal's 1-23.

Jeff Byard finished in 2nd Place with a brilliant flight from Tehachapi, CA. to Quartzite, Arizona. Jeff said that he only had to work 9 thermals, and only got low once in the vicinity of Krey Field. Jeff relates that he kept over flying airports with good restaurants, but as the lift was so good, he just kept heading east.

At the end of Jeff's flight, he had to scout the Quartzite area for an airport, and finally found one. He had to hike a couple of miles to find a phone to call his retrieval crew, who were waiting at 29 Palms. It was 11:00 PM before his crew, along with a police escort, arrived to disassemble Jeff's ship. Jeff and crew did not get back to Tehachapi until 6:00 AM on the next day. Jeff had his landing card signed by the Mayor of Quartzite.

Doug Fronius finished in 4th Place with a flight from Tehachapi, CA. to Desert Centre, CA. Doug had to take a relight, and the author, who was off before Doug thought that Doug was having an "off" day. While I was milling around near Tehachapi's famous bald spot, I watched Doug being towed to the south of my position on his relight and thought of tagging along, and perhaps I should have as events turned out. Doug had an excellent flight, and was in constant contact with his retrieve crew. They were waiting for him when he landed.

Wayne Spani came in 9th with a flight from Tehachapi to Bishop, CA. Wayne was the last VSA member to be launched and he headed north up the Owens Valley, in hot pursuit of the author. Originally C.D.Termal had conned Wayne in to team flying so that they could double their effective thermal searching capabilities. C.D. got the handicap figures mixed up and thought that if he and Wayne landed at the same place, that C.D. would have a higher standing in the finishing results than Wayne. C.D. did not compete in the event but that is another story.

Wayne got up to 14,000 feet in thermal lift, just to the east of Tehachapi, and headed North. Wayne was at 12,000 ft over Inyokern, while the author was mired at 9,500 ft at the same spot, flying Termal's ill handling ship. Wayne headed North up the Owens Valley and lost all his altitude before arriving at the Cinder Cone which bout 20 miles north of Inoykern. At one point the down wash from the Sierra Nevadas, caused Wayne to lose 2,000 ft in one turn. Wayne was just about ready to land, when he saw a red tailed hawk circling in lift. Scraping over ridges of basalt and with about one mile of high tension cable about ready to enter the cockpit with him, Wayne bounced in to the hawk's thermal and soared back up to 13,000 ft.

Wayne then headed North along the east side of the Owens Valley in violent turbulence, and eventually ended up in Bishop. Wayne's crew, who had searched every possible landing spot along the Owens Valley, finally found Wayne at the Bishop Airport just at sunset. After disassembling the mighty KA-8, a famished crew, George Wissig, Blacksten, Termal, and the author had a gourmet supper at a local restaurant. Wayne finally got home at 4:00 A.M.

The author came in about 5th from last in Coren D.Termal's 1-23. I was a last minute replacement pilot for Coren, who unfortunately spun round suddenly and cracked his head against the Left wing of Jeff Byard's Slingsby. A pretty woman had been running by and with Coren's well documented eye for the ladies in full function, he spun round, hit the wing, and was rendered comatose. Blacksten, the young lady, and Byard threw C.D. into Blacksten's truck. which was Termal's chase vehicle, and in a trice, I went from being a crew member to being a pilot.

In another effort to take advantage of any situation that he can, Coren had developed a secret airframe wax, that he had designed to lower airframe drag. C.D had seen the advertisement in some aircraft publication about a wax than can reduce airframe drag by about 30% and Coren thought he could do better, and he did. Coren waxed the right wing and fuselage of his 1-23, and then started to impress some of the local ladies, who had come out to watch the start of the contest, with his old gliding stories. He came back and rewaxed the right wing again and thought that he was doing the unwaxed wing. What resulted was about a 70 % reduction of drag from the waxed wing, and all the normal drag was present on the unwaxed left wing. Once off tow, the glider kept trying to turn in to the unawaxed wing, much like a twin engined aircraft tries to turn in to it's dead engine. The resulting cross controlling that I had to do to counteract this unequal drag severely degraded the 1-23's L/D.

I got off tow and climbed to 13,500 ft in thermal lift and milled around to the South of Tehachapi, until last year's winner came along. As he was in a 1-26, I could keep up, and as all the top contest pilots do, I used him as a thermal marker. We headed North and I radioed my crew to go towards Inyokern. I eventually, thermalling to the Right only, got to 14,500 ft somewhat to the West of California City Airport, and following what I thought was the correct road, headed up the Owens Valley. During the pilots' briefing they said don't get out in the middle of the valley as usually the lift is not very good. My thermal marker went west, the wrong way I thought, and I went to the Northeast following the wrong road as it turned out, which put me right over the center of the valley. I had a semi straight glide to Inyokern.

I radioed my crew, and Termal who had regained his senses again said to head for the Cinder cone, and will win for sure. I

tried but kept losing altitude, and having to come back to the Inyokern house thermal which took me up to 9,000 ft. I tried heading west in to the Sierras, but no lift and turbulence sent me back to Inyokern. After wasting 45 -50 minutes at Inyokern, Wayne Spani caught up to me but 3,000 ft higher. As my seat was sore, and the back problem that I get when I fly anything of C.D.Termal's (a streak of yellow), manifested itself, I decided to land at Inyokern. I landed and neither Blacksten, who was getting an oral history from some desert rat who had once, maybe, seen a CG-4A fly overhead in 1943, nor Termal, could find me on the airport. After about ten minutes, Blacksten finally drove up. We tied the 1-23 down, hooked up with Spani's loan crew member, and headed North to find Wayne.

We finally got back to Inyokern at 10:00 P.M. and my crew, along with Spani and his crew member derigged the 1-23 for the trip back to Hemet.

Well I learned a lot about contest flying, as this was my first try at it. The glass guys learned that they might as well stay home when the vintage ships show up. But we did not learn Coren's secret drag reducing wax formula, as the concussion he received at Tehachapi erased his memory of what he had used to make his wonder wax.

Next year, we will all be back to compete again. This time Raul will be flying and I will be crewing for him. We are hoping for a nice turn out of vintage ships, and we would like to encourage you other VSA members to bring your vintage and classic ships out and compete.

NEWS FROM RAUL BLACKSTEN indicates that his ALBATROSS SENIOR which he is restoring with a partner, is not going to be ready in May but is likely to be finished in late September his year. In our previous VGC News, we gave a completion date for this project as May 1994. This is surely America's greatest vintage sailplane and must be one of the most remarkable in the World. Designed in 1933, with a max. L/D of 1:30 at 34 mph,and a stall at 19 mph, one other is on display in the National Soaring Museum at Harris Hill, Elmira.

VSA's REGIONAL RUMBLINGS. Western Zyphers. by Coren D.Termal.

Hot Digity Dawg ! The LONG sought Soaring Landmark Monument at Point Loma (San Diego) has finally been approved. This is great ! Finally an honor to me and my buddies Hawley Bowlus and Jack Barstow. Although it's been a while ago, I well remember ridge soaring the Point in a Bowlus Albatross with Hawley, Jack, and even little Bud Perl, back in the late '20s.It seems that everyone except the National Park Service has been all for our monument. For some stupid reason, the Park Service did not want anyone to place this great honor on their land and Park Service land makes up a good chunk of Pt.Loma real estate. Along came my buds Bob Fronius and the Navy to the rescue. Bob so wanted to keep the Point Loma gliding history from being lost to memory and to put up a plaque in MY honor, that he took over a crusade which had been running in to brick walls for several years, and in a few short years, himself has prevailed. Also, although I washed out of the marines during the War, the good 'ole Navy sees it in their heart to allow our monument to be placed on Navy land at Point Loma. This allows us to thumb our collective noses at the Park Service! The ceremony will be held on the 21st of May 1994. Anyone who has a mind to can contact me or Bob Fronius about the event.

Its funny how things go. I also hear that there is an effort underway in Hawaii to HELP place there a Soaring Landmark for another of my ole pals; Lt. William a Cocke, his Nighthawk glider, and their 1931 US and World Endurance Record of 21 hours 34 minutes. Due to the fact that when I made my try at this record, my barograph did not work, this official record still stands, 62 years later! I always regret not being able to get to Hawaii in time to take part in that contest. Then ME and Bill coulda shown 'em who the best in the world really was. Just think, it could have been another honor for me. Speaking of the Nighthawk, its finally going to the NSM (National Soaring Museum). I think that is that museum on top of Hank Harris Hill, Elmira. And it's about time ! The LA Museum what owns it (the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History) seems to have little interest in finding a home for it. Worse still, the museum where its been at (the Santa Monica Museum of Flying) just wanted rid of it. They all finally came AROUND though and that's all that counts. The best thing is, I get to drive it back to Elmira, but this'll probably be in the spring some time. You can be sure I'll write all about it when I get back.

By the way, some folks have been asking about my Apperson SAPSUCKERS. It seems that some of you DON'T know what they are, exactly. Well, to be truthful they are a product of Canada and were designed by Bon Champ Louie Apperson. What is interesting is, they are made out of whale bone and seal skin by Eskimos up in the North West Territories. It takes them all winter to lash one together and once that sinew dries, that glider ain't never gonna come apart, unless it rains. The Sapsucker has to be the finest glider ever made in Canada. Heck, it has to be the finest glider to ever EXIST. One of you lucky folks may find out soon as I am going to have to sell my Sapsucker 11b. I accidentally damaged it and can't afford to repair it, so I was gonna offer it for sale to some lucky soul. Fortunately, I still have my Sapsucker 111.

You know, they call me DUMB, but at least on New year's Day I had nuff sense not to fly no open cockpit glider! Well, not having anything to do between Grand Marshaling the Rose Parade and midnight, I bopped on over to the Tehachapi gliderport, only to find a bunch of fools flying TOPLESS!!! It seems that your nutty Editor (not your VGC Editor! – Ed), Jeff Byard and his band of idiots had taken the canopies off gliders and were flying them that way!!! Let's see, there was Doug Eronius (Fronius), Span Wayni (Wayne Spani), Harry Irvine, Les King, that Clio guy (Raul Blacksten) and uh, oh yeah, Josh "Rat Fink" Knerr.

Speaking of "Rat Fink", at the age of 16, he got his Private Glider Pilots License on the 31st of December! I would congratulate him but it cost me a book. When we were in Elmira in July, never thinking he would do it, I promised him that if he got his license within six months, I would GIVE him a copy of Martin Simons' "The World's Vintage Sailplanes 1908-45", and he did it!!!!! It's a good thing that Clio guy has them for sale.

Anyway, on New Year's Day, Harry Irvine let Josh FLY his 1-23, but not topless, which was the first SOLO seat glider he had ever flown. He did OK but did not seem to stay up very long.

Your reporter recently received an appellation of honor from some visitors from the far East, who had been staying at the R.V. campground at the Tehachapi Gliderport. I was engaged with a match race with some local hang gliders, and had five flights in one hour. After the 5th relight, I gave up as the hang glider pilots were way out on course, and as I walked up to the glider port office, a group of oriental visitors were

pointing at me, and said "him komdownsoon, him komdownsoon". I pointed to myself and said "me komdownsoon"? and they all laughed and said "yes". I can only guess that the komdownsoon is a great soaring bird of the orient. I have looked in some ornithology books for a picture of this fabulous bird but have not found it listed. Perhaps, one of my devoted readers can send me in a photograph, or even a drawing of what a Komdownsoon looks like.

Well, guess that's about all for now. Our fine Editor is breathing down my neck about getting this thing done and out. As always your reporter of all things Western, COREN D.TERMAL, has a SWELL time telling you all about his stuff but if we want to keep at the HEAD of the line ahead of the news from that new Eastern CLOWN, you Westerners have gotta keep letting me know what's going on. TTFN.

WORDS TO REMEMBER:

"Time spent not fix'n and fly'n old gliders, is time wasted". *Anonymous.*

AUSTRALIAN NEWS

NATIONAL HONOUR TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE VGA (Vintage Gliding Assn. of Australia).

Members of the vintage glider assn, were among 80 people gathered at the home of VGA President Alan Patching in Melbourne on the 29th of January to celebrate the announcement that Alan had been made a Member of the Order of Australia. The citation of the award said that it was made in recognition of his services to gliding.

The party, hosted by Alan's wife, Lorna, and members of his family, also celebrated the 50th anniversary of Alan's first flight in a glider in 1944. The flight was made at Geelong in a Pratt two-seater, with pioneer glider pilot Percy Pratt at the controls. Later, Alan was one of the founders of the Victorian Motorless Flight Group. Alan is still a member of the club, an active sailplane pilot, tug pilot and gliding instructor. He is the present owner of the Golden Eagle, the oldest airworthy sailplane in Australia. The designer/builder of the Golden Eagle, Geoff Richardson, was among the guests of the celebratory party, accompanied by his wife Betty.

The nomination of Alan for the award was made officially by his long time friend and fellow member of the VMFG, Geoff Newlands, with the backing of the club and the GFA and the support of leading personalities in the Gliding Movement, OSTIV and the Royal Institute of Technology. During his 50 years of involvment in the gliding movement, Alan Patching has held many executive positions in the GFA, the Victorinan Soaring Association and the VMFG. He has also flown in National and State competitions, been part of the Australian team at the World gliding Championships in Argentina, assisted in the running of the two World Competitions in Australia, acted as Australian representative to OSTIV and been Chairman and member of several OSTIV Committees and contributed technical papers to several OSTIV Congresses.

During his working life, Alan was an engineer with the Aeronautical Research Labaratories in Melbourne and achieved an international reputation as an expert on aircraft materials' fatigue.

Since his retirement, he has given honorary service at the RMIT in the investigation of fatigue on a JANUS sailplane wing. In addition, Alan has contributed to other sport flying organisations, including the Sport Aircraft Association, the Ultralight Federation and the Kite Association. He is also a member of the Royal Aeronautical Society and the Australian Aviation Historical Society, to both of which he has contributed lectures.

In the nomination for the award, the summary of Alan's many contributions to gliding alone occupy more than seven type-written pages. The award of the Order of Australia in recognition of his services will be welcomed by all gliding people as being well deserved.

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ANNUAL VINTAGE GLIDER REGATTA took place at TEMORA, NSW, during the week of the 15th-23rd January 1994. It was a smaller than usual turn-out for the annual regatta but it was still a successful event that was enjoyed by those who did attend.

The choice of Temora as the venue meant that the regatta had to be held two weeks'later than usual as this did not suit several would be participants, as they had to have their holidays during the Christmas – New Year break. Nevertheless it was a successful event and was enjoyed by those who did manage to attend. Also, several of those who had planned to attend found themselves fighting big bushfires in Eastern NSW. Still the regatta attracted seven sailplanes and an ultra light aircraft and the result was more than 50 hours of flying and more than 1,000 kms of cross country soaring. During the first half of January, Temora was the venue for the NSW Sports and Two-Seater Competition.

The VGA patron Kevin Sedgman came the furthest to attend.He brought his Sunbird ultralight on a trailer all the way from Cairns, Queensland, a distance of some 3,500 kms! It took six days for the trip. Others came from NSW, Victoria and the ACT.

Garry Morgan from Sydney brought his recently restored TERN but it was not flown during the regatta. Others attending and flying were: Bob McDicken (Ka-6), Wally Stott and



Frank Hudson (Ka-6), Mike Valentine and Chris Cullinan (Ka-2B),Wally Wolf (Grunau 4), Alan Patching (Golden Eagle) and Jim Collett and Chris Edwards (Pilatus B4). Among others at the regatta were Ged Terry (UK), Keith Nolan, Noel Lovell, Ray Ash, Ralph Crompton, Edwin Pedersen, Lorelle Esmore, Dick Duckworth and Leo Dowling. Kevin Sedgman made a number of flights and the sailplanes were launched by the Temora club's Airdale, and the winch kindly loaned by the Greenthorpe Gliding Club.

Temora turned on some good soaring weather, with only one day being declared unflyable on because of strong winds. The surrounding country offered good cross country prospects with large outlanding fields, though only a few pilots had to make use of the latter.

The usual competition was held as part of the regatta and most pilots took part in it. The task was to fly as many kilometres as possible within a space of two hours. Bonus points were given for a landing within one minute of the allotted two hours. Most pilots kept very close to the allotted time and on three occasions, pilots landed within seconds of the two hour limit.

The competition was closely contested and was won by Wally Scott in his Ka-6 with an average of 983.3 points. In second place was Jim Collett in his Pilatus B4 with 981.7 points average. Wally Scott now flies with the Lake Keepit club. He was an early member of the Tamworth Gliding Club back in the 1950s. Jim Collett flies with the Bathurst Soaring Club.

For the first time since the VGA began holding regattas in 1977, there was aircraft damage, fortunately without serious results for the pilots involved. Bob McDicken was making his landing roll in a paddock when a sheep suddenly dashed accross in front of the Ka-6. The sheep was not seriously injured, but the Ka-6 suffered damage to its wing tip and leading edge.

On another day, Wally Wolf had a low winch launch in his Grunau 4 and ran in to strong sink. He wasn't able to complete a normal circuit and, in turning short, the Grunau 4 stalled and spun in.

Wally suffered some injuries and had to spend four days in the local hospital. A month later, his wife Sonia reported that he was making a good recovery and planned to repair the Grunau 4 which had its nose smashed in, and there was some damage to its wings.

Pete Carlson provided an excellent and accurate weather forecast each day based on data received from Wagga Wagga. He even made a correct prediction of thermal strength and height on a day when the only information given by the computor was the wind's direction and strength.

The annual meeting of the VGA was held on the only non flying day, Sunday the 16th. It was attended by 19 members and several visitors.

The meeting re-elected Alan Patching as President and Allan Ash as secretary/treasurer. It was decided to retain the annual subscription at the prtesent rate of $10 a year.

The president advised that all the applications for the reduced airworthiness fee that had been received by the VGA (Vintage Glider Association of Australia) had been approved by the GFA (Gliding Federation of Australia). Members were reminded that applications should be sent first to the VGA's secretary. The VGA's Patron, Kevin Sedgman, donated two non perpetual trophies for the Regatta, and two other trophies, previously donated by the GFA, were on display. The president said that these two trophies were available to the VGA members who scored highest in the two seater and single seater sections of the GFA annual decentralised competition. He said that the trophies could not be awarded this year because no applications had been made for them. He urged VGA members to take part in the decentralised competition and to submit claims for the trophies to the VGA secretary.

The meeting was told that invitations had been received from both the Grampians Soaring Club and the Swan Hill Gliding Club to host the next VGA regatta. Following discussion, the members expressed a preference for Swan Hill as the venue, and for the first week in January 1995, as the time for the next regatta. Some members reported successful visits from overseas vintage glider enthusiasts, and it was agreed that one or two contact names in each State should be provided by the secretary for publication in the VGC News, the magazine of the Vintage Glider Club in Europe. VGA members willing to act as contacts for such visitors should notify the VGA secretary as soon as possible. (We look forward to receiving further information about events in Australia – Ed)

In conclusion, the annual meeting extended a vote of thanks to the members of the Temora Aero Club Gliding Wing for their hospitality in hosting the regatta, and especially to those who did the catering, and to the tug pilots.

WAR ENDS 1939 PLAN TO PROMOTE ADVANCED GLIDING IN AUSTRALIA by Allan Ash ?

When Doctor George Heydon imported a Slingsby Gull 1 in early 1939, Australia had its first sight of what could be described as a high performance sailplane.

Doc. Heydon was so enthusiastic about the possibilities of high performance cross country soaring in Australia that he wrote to Philip Wills, then the top British soaring pilot, and invited him to visit Australia with a sailplane to show the locals how it should be done.

Several years earlier, Wills had visited South Africa with a Kirby Kite.* The impact of this visit and the flights made by Wills and local South African pilots, was a major factor in getting the sport under way in that country. Doc. Heydon had visions of a similar pattern of events in Australia.

Wills was enthusiastic about the plan and made preparations to leave England by ship in about the middle of 1939. Arrangements for bringing a sailplane hinged to a great extent on the likelihood of selling the machine in Australia when he returned to England.

At first, Wills considered bringing his German-built Minimoa, but then thought that it might be better to bring one of the new high performance two seater sailplanes that were then being developed in England. These were the Slingsby Gull 2, a development of the Gull, and the Scott Viking 2, which was a development of the single seater Viking.

Wills envisaged a series of training camps in which he could give dual instruction in high performance soaring and cross country flying to Australian glider pilots.This would serve not only to introduce Australian pilots to advanced soaring but would also provide valuable publicity for the gliding movement in Australia.

Despite Doc Heydon's enthusiasm for the project and the moral support of Australian glider pilots, it was found impossible to guarantee the sale of such an expensive sailplane. So the idea of bringing a two-seater was set aside.

In December 1938, Slingsby produced the prototype PETREL, a sleek 18 metre span single seater with a glide ratio of 27 (very advanced for those days) and, even more incredible, a minimum sink of less than 2 feet a second.

Wills' thoughts turned to this machine and he arranged for Slingsby to build a Petrel for him, having a slightly larger cockpit than that of the prototype. One of his aims during his Australian visit was to attempt a soaring flight from Adelaide to Melbourne which, if successful, would have a set a new world soaring record for distance.

While these plans were being advanced, however, the political scene in Europe was rapidly darkening. Wills' proposed departure in late July 1939 was changed to early October but, before that date arrived, Europe had been plunged into war and plans for the introduction of advanced soaring instruction had to be cancelled.

Despite this setback, Doc Heydon continued to hold high hopes for cross country soaring in Australia and at Easter 1940, he and a group of other members of the Sydney Soaring Club took the GULL to Narromine in central NSW and carried out a number of cross country flights in it.

By today's standards, the flights were modest, but they set and broke the National distance and altitude records several times, raising the distance figure from 30 miles (48 kms) set by Norm Hyde in the GCV Grunau Baby in 1939, to new figures of 50 miles (80 kms), then 101 miles (162 kms) and finally 105 miles (168 kms).

These flights proved beyond doubt that inland Australia provided an ideal climate for long distance soaring flights.After the war ended, Philip Wills made several business trips to Australia, though without a sailplane. However his friendly enthusiasm and wise council, not to mention his shrewd and sometimes cutting comments, did much to boost the early post-war gliding movement in Australia and set it more firmly on the road to sound growth.

All the above news was taken from "VINTAGE TIMES" Number 62, March 1994. This is the Newsletter of the Vintage Glider Association of Australia. Editor/Secretary: Allan Ash, 2 Heath Avenue, Frankston, Victoria 3199.

* The Kite 1 that Philip Wills took to South Africa in 1936 is still believed to be airworthy there. CW.

BRITISH NEWS

During the period November 1993 – Easter 1994, there have been frequent strong winds and storms over Britain. So far as C.Wills has accertained, no less than seven glider trailers have been blown over. Four at Wycombe Air park, one (a heavy non vintage Jantar trailer) at Halton, and two at the London Gliding club. While undoubtably our vintage gliders over the last 20 years have got in to much better hands, perhaps more attention should be given to their gliders' safe storage in winter. Luckily the damage sustained to the aircraft during these disasters has now been repaired. It is no good using the argument that "my glider trailer survived outside last winter, it will be alright outside again next winter", strong winds over airfields in Britain are common and, what is more dangerous, last winter they managed to swing through a large angle; a trailer tied down to weather a strong wind from one direction frequently found that it had to battle against it broad side on. Last time, the killer gales came in from the South. This year, they frequently came in from the North West having started from the South. The weather forecasting was good in almost every case but it was difficult to be there to re-brace a trailer for every onslaught from another direction. We are glad to say that gliders at Lasham and Dunstable are usually more safely secured now.

During the inclement winter weather, we have been glad to hear that restorations have proceeded on two new H.28-2s, on one new Scud 1, and on the original Avia 40P, Krajanek, and Petrel. The last three are being constantly worked on by a Vintage Group at Wycombe Air Park which has never been daunted by the weather. There was even a hill soaring expedition during the Spring to fly a Tutor from the Long Mynd, in a 30 knot wind up the slope. We congratulate Mike Birch, Graham Saw, John Tournier, George Izera and others for their continuous work on vintage gliders at Wycombe Air Park throughout the winter. It is believed that Peter Underwood at Eaton Bray near Dunstable has been proceeding with the restoration of the last Dagling (Zoegling). This was the standard ab-initio training primary glider in the British clubs during the 1930s.

It is hoped that six of the restorations will be ready to take part in the 22nd International Rally at Lasham starting on the 6th August. Some of them will undoubtably take part during the week beforehand in the RendezVous 94 Rally at Dunstable.

We are constantly amazed by the enthusiasm to restore old gliders in Britain which has continued unabated throughout the 21 years of the Vintage Club's existance. We ask foregiveness, if any current restoration projects have been left out. Apart from the seven restorations mentioned above, there may be others. Please let us know about them.

There is the FAFNIR project. Its initiator, John Lee is still attempting to obtain more information about the aircraft and has produced a large number of drawings.

During the International rallies in Britain this summer, many of the recent restorations of our members in Britain will be revealed to the World for the first time. The H.28-3, the new Gull 3 are just two of them which should cause interest. They are evidence of the incredible efforts of our members. Finally the VGC on behalf of all its members sends its congratulations and best wishes to Francis Russell and Veronique, as they got married in March. There was no flying at the London Club on that Saturday. We wish them happiness and thermals for the years to come.

There were not many cross country flights in vintage gliders reported during 1993. This could mostly be due to the poor soaring weather over Britain during last summer. We very much regret not giving an account in VGC News of the 1993 Slingsby rally at Sutton Bank. We understand that a dual aerotow was performed and that one of the gliders taking part was the Kite 1 flown by Tony Maufe. We also heard that he had succeeded in hill soaring Skiddaw in the Lake District. While the 1993 Slingsby Rally was not an official VGC event and the VGC was actually holding a Rally in Norfolk at the time, we are sorry that this happened and hope that more Vintage Gliders will take part in the next Slingsby Rallies to keep the names of Fred and Fluff alive as they did so much for British Gliding.

FRENCH NEWS

The christening of the Breguet 904 "Ville d'Avrille" was performed at Avrille (Angers) at 11.00 hrs on Thursday 11th March 1994. The Deputy Mayor of Avrille and Vice President of the General Council Marc LAFFINEUR was present at the ceremony. The first flight of the prototype was on 26th May 1956 and 15 Breguet 904s were built in total. In 1956, it must have among the best sailplanes in the world. It probably, even in 1994 would have a performance comparable with that of many fibreglass two seaters.

NOTICE

Dr Jörg Ziller
Brucknerstr. 20
D-71065 Sindelfingen
Tel: +49 7031 815468

Liebe deutsche VGC Mitglieder,

die Abstimmung über den Austragungsort 1995 für das internationale VGC Treffen ging mit wenigen Stimmen vor Achmer für Oberschleißheim bei München aus. Die Abstimmungsliste wird offen gelegt und ist jeder Zeit einzusehen.

Der Veranstalter dieses Treffens wird der Oldtimer Segelflugverein München sein. Ich werde in Lasham bei unserem diesjährigen Treffen alle VGC Mitglieder nach Oberschleißheim einladen. Zwei Briefe des Ikarus Luftsportclubs Schleißheim und des Deutschen Museums liegen bei mir vor, die uns ihre Unterstützung anbieten.

Zur Zeit sind wir 74 VGC Mitglieder in Deutschland. Ich habe mich über jeden Brief, den ich auf mein Rundschreiben hin erhalten habe, gefreut. Ich danke jedem herzlich. Viel Spaß beim Fliegen in 1994.

Mit Fliegergrüßen
JÖRG

Dr Jörg Ziller
Brucknerstr. 20
D-71065 Sindelfingen
Tel: 49 7031 815468

Dear VGC Member,

Voting for the 1995 venue for the international VGC meeting resulted in a few votes ahead of Achmer for Oberschleissheim at Munich. The voting list is available for inspection at any time.

The organiser of this meeting will be the Oldtimer Glider Club of Munich. At Lasham during our meeting this year I shall invite all VGC members to Oberschleissheim. I have two letters, one from the Icarus Airsports Club Schleissheim and one from the German Museum, offering us their support.

Currently there are 74 VGC members in Germany. I have been very pleased with every letter I received in reply to my circular. Thank you very much, everyone. Happy flying in 1994.

Best wishes,
JÖRG

It is not known (by CW) how many airworthy Breguet 604s still exist. For many years they were property of the French State at Saint Auban. Now, some are in superb condition and are much loved by their French owners, but we suppose that the "Ville d'Avrille" Breguet 904 does belong to the Musee de l'Air at le Bourget? However the G.P.P.A. at Avrille, which is a Regional Musee de l'Air, is entrusted by the le Bourget Musee de l'Air et de l'Espace to restore its aircraft. It also exhibits them in a new hangar on the airfield of Avrille near Angers. The Breguet 904 "Ville d'Avrille" is to be flown at meetings as a glorious advertisement for the Town of Avrille which is to fund it and pay for its maintenance. It is now believed to be the second Breguet 904 at the Musee de l'Air Regional in the hands of the GPPA.

The GPPA is also finishing the aerobatic CM-8-13, which was first flown together with its high performance brother, the CM-8-15, in 1949.

GERMAN NEWS

Harald Kaemper wrote in March that his two Kranich 2s, formerly BGA Nos. 1092 and 1258, have been taken to Ziegenhain by Markus Lemmer (The OSC Wasserkuppe's new Werkstattleiter) and Sascha Hauser. It is hoped that they can build one Kranich 2 from their parts to fly during 1995. BGA 1092 had the Works Number 065 and was delivered to the Swedish Airforce during 1943 when it was registered Fv 8204. After 1945 in a civilian club, it had the registration SE-SPN. It gained its first BGA Certificate of Airworthiness in December 1963.

BGA 1258 was one of 1630 Kranich 2s built by Mraz in Chotzen (now Orlican in Chosen) Bohemia, during the war. After being brought to Britain by the RAF in Germany, it gained its first BGA Certificate of Airworthiness in August 1965. Its RAFGSA Number was 271. The above will not be the only KRANICH 2 to be airworthy in Germany. Another, which was Spanish built, has been restored to airworthy condition by Gerhard Bergmann at Michelstadt.

Gerhard Bergmann is currently working on a new MINIMOA 36.

In March, we had confirmation from America and Germany that the crate, containing HORTENS 2, 3F, 3G and 6, has safely arrived at the Berlin Museum fur Verkehr und Technik. It is intended to restore them for static exhibition in the Museum. Although they are on loan from the Smithsonian Institute, they will be displayed in the Berlin Museum for some time after their restorations. The Horten 4A LA-AD, which is being restored at Oberschleissheim for the German Museum, is going ahead well. It is possible that its original centre section is somewhere still in Germany. A search is being made for it. If it can not be found, a new centre section will be built for it. It promises to be one of the masterpieces of the Museum.

Should anyone know of the whereabouts of the original centre section or any of the history of LA-AD, which was the second Horten 4A to fall into the hands of the British in 1945, would they kindly contact: Deutsches Museum, Flugwerft Schleissheim, Effnerstrasse 18, 85764 Oberschleissheim, Germany. Tel: 089/ 315714-1.

Owing to the success of the SB-13 Flying wing from the Akaflieg Braunschweig, it is likely that there will be







(Top) About to move Kranich 2c BGA 1092 and 1258 to near the Wassekuppe for repair and restoration. Harald Kämper with Leerd in centre. Yarkus Lemmer on the right with Sascha Häuser next to him.

(Middle) Loading Kranich 2 BGA 1092 to take to near the Wassekuppe for retoration. Markus Lemmer cenre and Harald Kämper with coat on the left. Markus and Sascha Häuser will restore it.

(Bottom) Harald Kämper moving wing of BGA 1258 before loading it at Schmer/Osnabruck. To be restored by Markus Lemmer and Sascha Häuser.

Photos by Chris Wills

considerable renewed interest in flying wings. The SB-13 has now been flown by many pilots, some of whom not having much gliding experience. It has been flown in contests and has achieved two 600 km triangles. All that is recommended to improve it is a stronger nose retracting undercarriage for field landings and room for water ballast. It was noticed during winch launches that it could "break out" to one side. With these improvements, it would become an interesting sailplane for flying in Standard Class Contests.

Stefan Krahn of the Gesellschaft zum Bau des Reihers (Company to build a Reiher) has sent the very good news that the LBA has given the green light for them to build one, if not two, REIHERS. The LBA has said that they must be stressed according to the Building Requirements for sailplanes (BVS = Bauvorschriften fur Segelflugzeuge) of 1940. The flight tests and Kennblatt must be according to JAR 22 because the BVS has no rules for these. Hannes Grannemann will do all the stress calculations. Those for the wing should be ready at the end of the year. The procedure is to send all the stress calculations and drawings to the Oskar Ursinus Vereinigung (OUV) and this organization will send them on to the Luftfahrt Bundesamt (LBA). Meanwhile the building of the wing ribs can start during this summer.

As the above requirements are for series produced sailplanes, it has been decided to build a REIHER 2 and a REIHER 3. It is believed that the Reiher 3 was the version of the Reiher 2 for mass production (six were built). Does anyone know the differences between the Reiher 2 and 3s? (If anyone does, please could they send the information to C.Wills, Wings, The Street, Ewelme, Oxon OXI0 6HQ, England. Tel:- (0)491-839245.) Markus Lemmer is to take part in building the Reihers as well as the building of a Kranich 2 using the parts of the two wrecks from England. Sef Kurz, the former Werkstattleiter of the OSC Wasserkuppe, is supposed to be having a rest after having built and restored, SG 38s, Grunau Baby 2b, ES 49, Ka-2, DFS Habicht, Rhoenbussard, Klemm 25 and an Udet 1926 Flamingo. Both the UDET FLAMINGO and the RHONBUSSARD have now flown. The latter, formerly BGA 395, flew first on the 28th of August 1993. The former, registered D-EOSC and UDET painted on its fuselage sides, has also flown.



President: Chris Wills
Wings
The Street
Ewelme
Oxford OX9 6HQ

Secretary: Robin Traves
Rose View
Marden Road
Staplehurst
Kent TN12 0JG

Treasurer: Geoff Moore
Arewa
Shootersway Lane
Berkhampsted
Herts HP4 3NP

The Club arose from the wish of the vintage glider owners at the very successful first International Vintage Glider Rally at Husbands Bosworth in 1973 to encourage the preservation of worthy gliders of the past, particularly by the ownership and active flying of these machines.

Associate membership is available to those who wish to support the activities of the club, and Associate members are very welcome at Rallies.

Rallies are organised in conjunction with local groups several times each year, and International Rallies are held annually in sequence.

A magazine is issued to members, and there are technical articles about gliders of historic interest. Readers are always invited to contribute articles of interest to publish.

The club endeavours to keep subscriptions as low as possible. Donations towards the running costs of the club are always gratefully received.

✂ **CUT**

Membership No. **(please include your membership number when renewing)**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (1994)

I renew/apply for Owner/Associate membership of the Vintage Glider Club, and enclose remittance for:

		£	
Initial Membership fee	☐	3.00	(payable only once on joining)
Annual subscription	☐	12.00	(Great Britain)
Annual subscription	☐	14.00	(Europe)
Annual subscription	☐	16.00	(Rest of the world to cover airmail postage)
Donation	☐	_____	
Total		_____	

Cheques should be made payable to the VINTAGE GLIDER CLUB. Overseas members are requested to pay by Girocheque, Eurocheque or in sterling drawn on a British Bank

For all members (block capitals or typewritten please)

Surname _____ Christian Name _____ Title _____

Address _____

_____ Telephone _____

Gliding or soaring club (or other aero club) _____

Your gliding and/or PPL qualification /Experience/Modeller _____

Trade or profession _____

please turn over

PLEASE NOTE:

a) **Membership is individual (not by syndicate).**

b) Owner membership is either sole ownership or ownership in a syndicate.

c) Club owned aircraft are accepted as though the club were a single owner.

d) Unless b) or c) apply, associate membership is applicable.

e) The club reserves the right through the committee to accept or decline any particular glider for owner membership.

The club would be pleased to have fuller details of your glider(s) on a separate sheet, enclosed with this form

---

For owner members (block capitals or typewritten please)

Type of glider _____

Maker and date _____

Registration _____

Other numbers _____

Colour scheme _____

Where normally flown _____

Other owner(s) _____

Condition (airworthy/under repair/refurbishing/museum exhibit) *(delete where applicable)*

Note:
The club records are on computer file. So that we keep within the British Law (Data Protection Act 1984) please sign opposite:

I have no objection to my VGC membership record being held on a computer file:

Signed _____

Please post with your remittance to:
Geoff Moore, Arewa, Shootersway Lane, Berkhampsted, Herts HP4 3NP

ORDER FORM

No req £

Adhesive badges @ £0.40 each.
Blue motif on silver 3" dia. Four types:
Front glued for sticking inside windscreen
1 'Vintage Glider Club' ..... ☐ _____
2 'Vintage Glider Club Member' ..... ☐ _____
Back glued for sticking on glider etc.
3 'Vintage Glider Club' ..... ☐ _____
4 'Vintage Glider Club Member' ..... ☐ _____
9" dia. PVC sticker, blue motif on silver 'Vintage Glider Club' Back glued for trailers etc. @ £1.50 each ..... ☐ _____

Cloth badges @ £1.50 each.
Blue motif on silver-grey. 2.75" dia..... ☐ _____

Metal lapel badges @ £1.50 each.
Silver-coloured motif on blue enamel. 0.625" dia. ..... ☐ _____

Brooches @ £2.00 each. Blue and white enamel. 1.125" dia. ..... ☐ _____

Key rings @ £3.00 each.
As Brooch on black leather fob. ..... ☐ _____

Large Postcards
four different colour prints from original paintings by H.K. Harwood of historical and vintage glider scenes,
@ £0.20 each, or £0.60 per set of 4 ..... ☐ _____

Pom-pom knitted hats
in different colours.
£4.00 each. ..... ☐ _____

Beanie Hats white drill printed VGC crest navy blue @£3.50 Med: .... ☐ _____
Large: ..... ☐ _____

Miniature wind socks 20 cms long
@£1.30 ..... ☐ _____

Ball points @ £0.50 each.
Light blue, with silver motif, 'Vintage Glider Club', retractable. ..... ☐ _____

Sub-total _____

No req £

Sub-total b/f _____

Tee-shirts, white, with central blue motif 6.5" dia.

L £4.50..... ☐ _____
XL £4.50..... ☐ _____
XXL £5.50..... ☐ _____

Crew-necked sweat shirts,with 6.5" motif central on chest "Birch" grey with navy blue motif or "Bright Royal" blue with white motif.

L £14.50..... ☐ _____
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XXL £15.50..... ☐ _____

Replica transfers of the original SLINGSBY Emblem £2.50 each

Quantity..... ☐ _____

Mugs with VGC Crest
Blue strong plastic with white motif @ £2.50 each ..... ☐ _____
White Pottery with blue motif @ £3.00 each ..... ☐ _____

Ties @ £5.00 each. White motif woven in coloured tie.
Green (vert, grün)..... ☐ _____
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Grey (gris, grau)..... ☐ _____
Navy (bleu foncé, dunkelblau)..... ☐ _____

Please add postage and packing
(foreign rates in brackets):
Each sweat shirt or polo shirt £1.75p (£3.00) _____
Each T-shirt, mug, pom-pom or beanie hat £1.00 (£1.50) _____
Small quantity badges or other small items 50p (£1.00) _____

TOTAL _____

Cheques should be payable to 'Vintage Glider Club' in sterling, drawn on a British bank, or Eurocheques payable in sterling. (No cash)

I enclose the sum of _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Please send to:
VGC Sales, 22 Elm Avenue, Watford WD1 4BE
Tel 0923 241 924

7.94

The Vintage Glider Club – Technical Articles

	£
Manuel "Wren" Series – 2 sides. £0.50	
Kranich – 8 sides. £2.00	
Bowlus Baby Albatross – 4 sides. £1.00	
Weihe – 6 sides. £1.50	
Mü-13 – 6 sides. £1.50	
Spalinger – 4 sides. £1.00	
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Please add postage and packing (foreign rates in brackets):

First article	20p	(30p)	
each additional article	5p	(10p)	

TOTAL _____

Cheques should be payable to 'Vintage Glider Club' in sterling, drawn on a British bank, or Eurocheques payable in sterling. (No cash)

I enclose the sum of _____

Name _____

Address _____

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Please send to:
VGC Sales, 22 Elm Avenue, Watford WD1 4BE
Tel 0923 241 924

NEWS FROM THE OLDTIMER CLUB MUNSTER is that a group of their younger pilots is to buy the Munster Minimoa from Rainer Willeke, who rescued it from France. The Oldtimer Club Munster is hoping this year to obtain a Hutter H.17a from Namibia. They will then have a fleet of Goppingen designed gliders; a Goppingen 3 Minimoa, a Goppingen 4 Goevier and a Goppingen 5 Hutter H.17a.

Concerning the latter, there is a tale. When C. Wills was at Waikerie, South Australia, he met a German who told him that he had built a Hutter H.17a in South West Africa. His H.17 was slightly changed to improve it, or so he hoped. He had recently taken part in an Australian gliding contest with a DG 400. In the midst of many other fibreglass sailplanes, the DG had got in to a spin and then,a spiral dive, with full water ballast tanks.Because of excessive positive G, he was unable to abandon the DG by parachute... ...until its wings came off, reversing its G and this catapulted him forthfrom the cockpit, to descend safely by parachute. Luckily, he had another DG 400 which he had hired to a Swedish girl at Wailkerie.

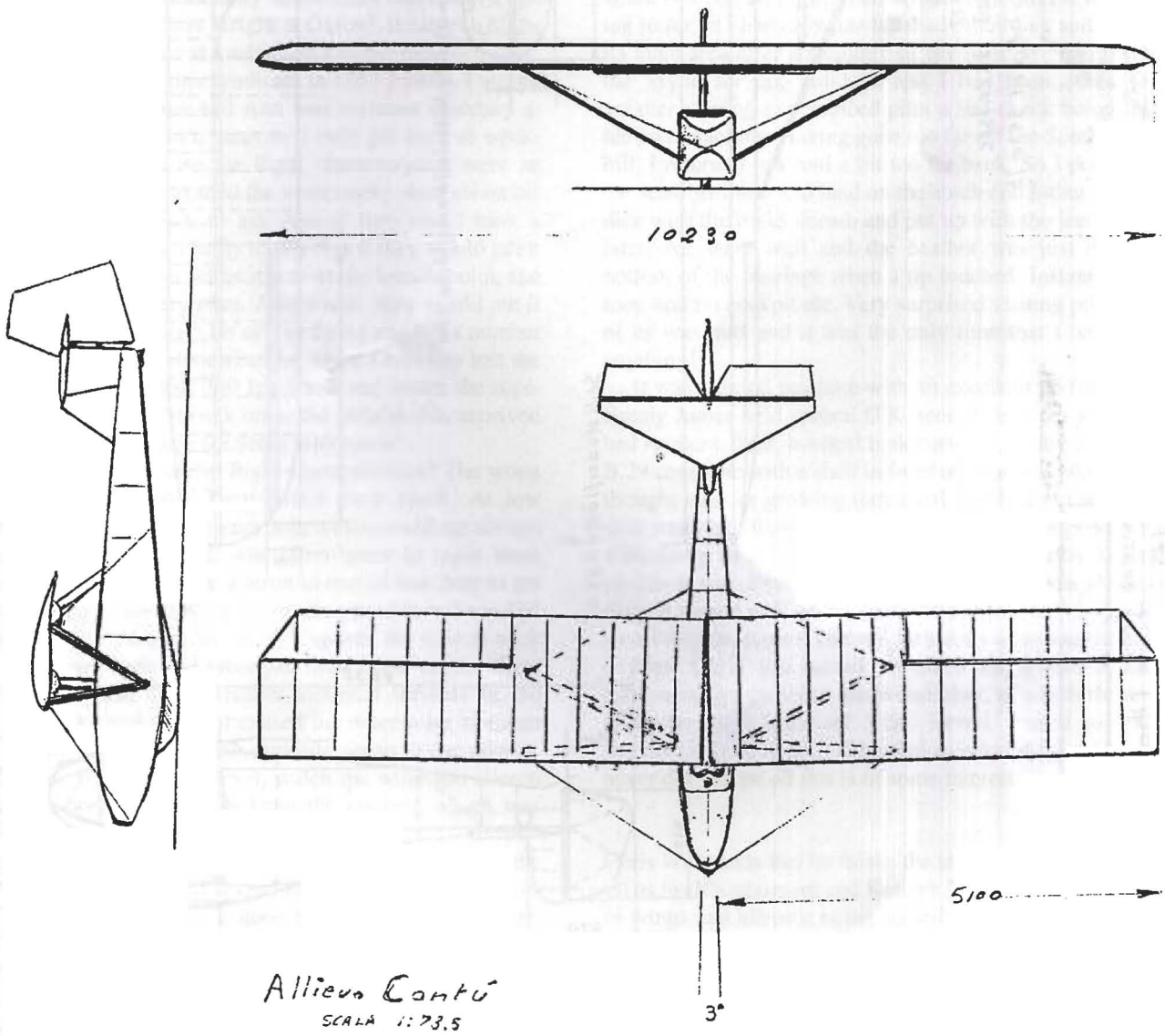
Could this be the same H.17a (Goppingen 5)?

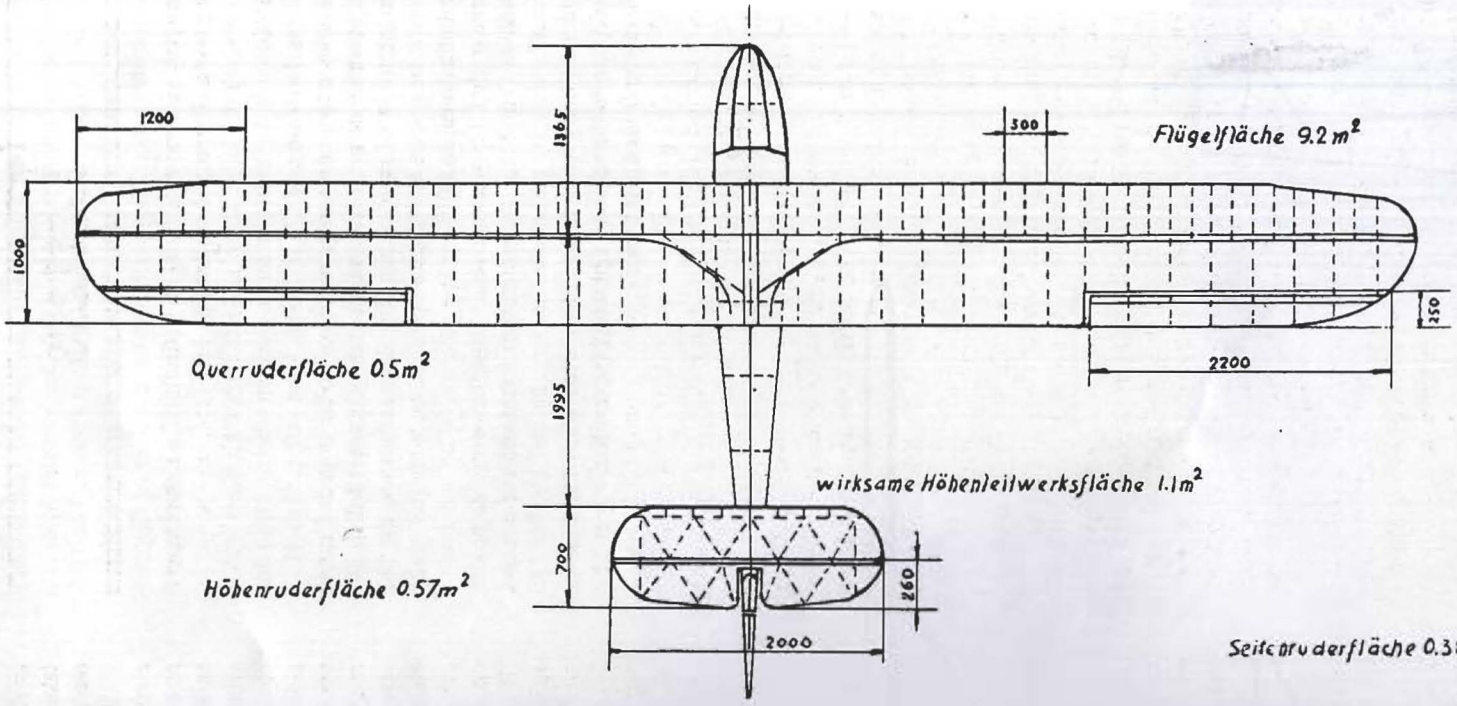
(See Hutter 3 view over page)

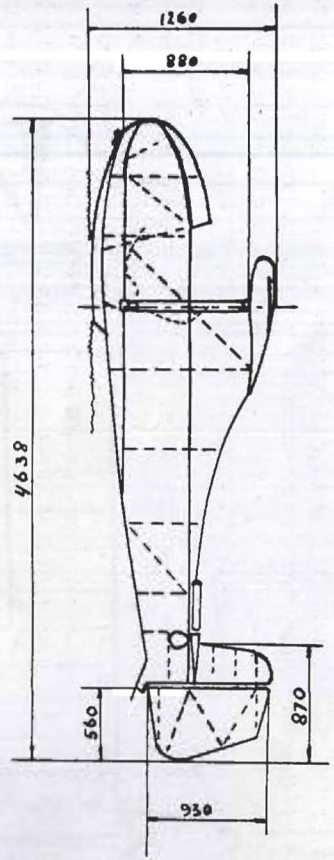
ITALIAN NEWS

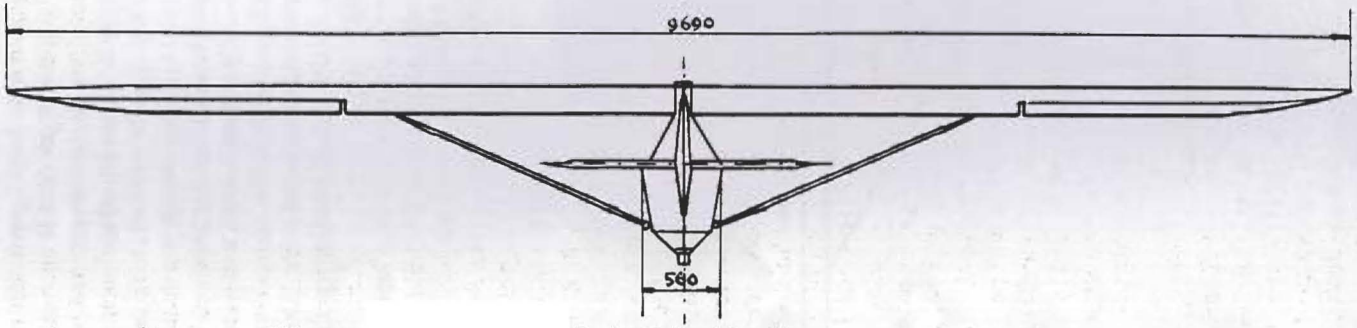
It seems that the Italian Vintage Glider Movement is really starting with the First Luigi Teichfuss International RALLY at PAVULLO near Modena in June.

News has reached us that Antonio Carlo Zorzolli has been restoring to airworthy condition an ancient ALIEVA CANTU sailplane. A three view drawing reveals that this aircraft has wing and tailplane resembling those of the Zoegling, Prufling, etc but that its wings are gently swept back. There are a considerable number of struts and wires to brace the aircraft and the whole gives one the impression of extreme antiquity. It is not yet clear as to whether the Alieva Cantu will be ready to come to the Italian Meeting or the International Rallies in Britain.









Leergewicht	68kg
Zuladung	90kg
Flächenbelastung	16.8 kg/m²
Seitenverhältniszahl	10.2

Beste Gleitzahl	17
Sinkgeschwindigkeit	88 cm/sec
Normalfluggeschwindigkeit	54 km/h
Profil G	535

		Hütter	
Massstab 1:25	H17	Übersicht	No 1

Letters

From Roy G. Procter C.ENG., F.R.Ae.S.... Coombe Quarry, Coombe Hill, Keinton Mandeville, Nr.Somerton, Somerset TA11 6DQ. Tel & FAX (0458) 223215. 10th June 1993. Ref.RP226.

Dear Chris, How are you ?

I have seen the summer 92 issue of VGC News and noted the not accurate comment on the demise of the Gull 2 (P.19). So I thought that it might be of interest to give some details. You may remember that Ann and I used to be members of the syndicate that operated it in the late 50's.

I believe that the machine made one or two flights just as war broke out but its flight characteristics were so awful it was "put away".

In about 1952 it was dug out to see what could be done. Reputedly the fuselage was lengthened by two feet to get a bit more leverage from the bits at the back. (I don't think your 3 view reflects this mod.) The inboard sections of the ailerons were disconnected and made a fixed part of the wing. The sticks and associated mechanism in the cockpit were replaced with T.21 components.

In this form it was deemed to be controllable and was issued with a C of A (presumably on the basis that it was a one off). It was owned by Chris Wright at Oxford. It came in to the possession of a syndicate at Lasham in a rather rundown state. Ann and I bought in to this syndicate in 1957 I think. I was in the Air Force at the time and Ann was assistant secretary at Lasham, living on site in a caravan. I only got back at weekends, sometimes! Because the flight characteristics were so odd, Derek Piggot used to send the more cocky students on his instructors' courses down to ask Ann if they could have a flight. The reponse was usually to say that if they would get it out, do a DI, and tell her when it was at the launch point, she would come out as safety pilot. Afterwards, they would put it away ! Thus she got quite a bit of free flying and left a number of incipient instructors somewhat the wiser. One chap lost the place completely at about 300 ft on tow and broke the rope. Ann recovered and got it back on to the airfield. She received Xmas cards from this chap for years afterwards!

So what were these awful flight characteristics? The worst feature was the ailerons. They didn't work much. At low speeds there was really excessive drag which could not always be countered with rudder. It was often better to make turns with full rudder and opposite aileron to use aileron drag to get some turn going! This took a bit of getting used to but was OK once you got the hang of it. At high speeds the aileron stick forces were very high and produced little effect on the flight path. This was due to insufficient torsional stiffness of the wing. thus, the hinge moment caused the outer wing to rotate about a spanwise centre in the opposite sense to the aileron. Result – Nil. You could however, watch the wing and aileron rotating in opposite directions from the cockpit, which was interesting.

The most difficult operation was getting it on and off the ground. The wing was of 65 ft span with about 4 ft of tip clearance. This, combined with a none too powerful rudder and ailerons which were totally ineffective below the stall made takeoff a tricky business. It was largely a matter of luck whether a wing tip touched the ground or not before some sort of control was obtained. This was not helped by the wing's ground angle, which was too steep, it was stalled. Thus on takeoff the drill was to keep the stick hard forward throughout the ground roll, the wingtip holder running ever faster.

If you could get the tail up, you might get a bit of aileron control. Usually the aircraft's tail would lift, unstall the wing resulting in instant lift-off and such aileron control as there was becoming available all happening at once.

If a wingtip touched, it was essentual to instantly abandon the launch and slam on the wheel brake to stop the machine before any significant yaw developed. This was the final undoing of the Gull 2. A new, and very experienced, member of the syndicate did not heed this briefing. A wing touched on aerotow takeoff and he didn't pull off. Full opposite rudder could not stop the yaw. The ailerons could not be deflected as the ground prevented this. When consideable yaw had developed, the pilot realised he could not continue and pulled off. (By this time, the tug's tail had been pulled round so it was aiming straight at the hangar). Relieved of the pull of the tow hook, yaw got to about 90 degrees and the aircraft became airborne, sideways. Rotation continued and the tail came up so that the machine finally hit the ground in a vertical nose down position travelling bottom side first. The cockpit was smashed, the fuselage was in at least two pieces and one wing was reduced to matchwood. The rest wasn't in very good shape either. I was there as I briefed the pilot and it all happened in front of me! It was beyond repair without any doubt at all. Nobody was hurt! This writeoff was all the more irritating to me as I had only just finished rebuilding and recovering its huge area after a stupidity of my own! We had taken it to the Mynd for our holidays and I had been asked to give another visiting experienced pilot a site check before he flew his own machine. Having gone too far off the South end of the hill, I returned low and a bit too far back. So I decided to do the sensible thing and land on the south end rather than have a dice with the rocks ahead, and put up with the jeers in the bar later. All went well and the heather was just rustling the bottom of the fuselage when a tip touched. Instant air/ground loop and no cockpit etc. Very surprised visiting pilot! Neither of us was hurt and it was the only time that I have pranged anything!

It was a grand machine with an excellent performance. Dr. Brenig James held several U.K. records in it for some time. It had spoilers, flaps, a wheel brake, and a gigantic cockpit like a B.29 complete with a shelf in front of your feet which we often thought was for growing tomatoes! But really it was an accident waiting to happen and I don't think that the powers that be were sorry to see it go before something much worse happened. It was a pity as in many respects it was ahead of its time. It soared well once you found out how to drive it! Brenig took away the pieces. Perhaps he knows what happened next?

Well, Chris, this turned out much longer than I expected. So, I won't go on about the Wonderlust, of which the drawing is in the same issue (of VGC News). I used to own this machine at one time. I intended to rebuild it and fly it, but never did ! Hope all this is of some interest.

Roy

Chris Wills adds that he thinks the above is of very great interest as his Rhonbussard and Kranich 2 do also have the problem of wings and ailerons being stalled at take off. The Rhonbussards are known for ground loops at take off, and his Kranich 2, before he had it, had a sprung metal tail skid that lifted the whole rear fuselage to bring its tailplane and wings into more closely a flying attitude. At take off, often only the towplane's

slip stream produces air flow over the wings, ailerons and tailplane, and if this is rotating, it produces a ground loop situation waiting to happen. If this starts with a Rhonbussard, a ground loop can happen so fast that the tow rope must be released like lightening. Of course, any head wind can improve the chances of there not being ground loops. Aircraft with large Russian propellors and short tow ropes make ground loops, and turbulance near the ground after take off, really horrific. He thanks Roy Procter for once again bringing attention to this situation (which was clearly worse with the Gull 2). It is a pity that it did not have a tailskid to raise its rear fuselage as any reduction of its angle of attack on the ground could only have improved its take off situation. Perhaps it did have such a tailskid and that, even with this, its angle of attack was too high. It is easy to be wise after the event.

Concerning the history of the Gull 2, Chris Wills believes that after roll out in 1939/40, it was in beautiful clear varnish and transparent doped finish. During the war, it was, with most other gliders in Britain, requisitioned by the military. It was then painted (probably silver) and was given military markings. It was eventually given to the A.T.C. and John Furlong's Gliding School. John Furlong discovered that it was quite some sailplane. It was taken with a King Kite by his ATC School and flown near Newcastle in May 1945. After this, with many other sailplanes, it came again into civilian hands but was kept at Slingsby Sailplanes for some time. It was flown from Sutton Bank by Slingsby test pilots and others. It was only after 1955 that it came to Lasham, after apparently being in the hands of Chris Wright at the Oxford GC at Kiddlington for a short time, also probably after 1955, because it was not there when C.Wills visited the club in 1954. It must then have been painted "training yellow ". (in the mid 1950s).

Dr Brenig James gave the wreckage of the Gull 2 to the ATC Unit at White Waltham . He had been informed by "the powers that be "that, as it was casein glued, it was not worth having it repaired.

The Tutor goes to the Mynd or Booker goes bungeying – 5th – 6th March 1994

When the 1994 weekend visits to the Long Mynd were planned I thought it would make a change to take one of our vintage gliders there, as they are ideally suited to hill-soaring, and I would not be taking up a place on the club single seater. Having flown the Prefect in a strong wind already I knew it would not be a problem provided we had enough people on the ground. John Tournier said he would also like to come along so it was decided to give it a C of A and swap it with the Tutor, which was in its trailer.

The C of A was duly carried out in mid-February, with the exception of a few minor points which would be completed the following week. Here fate took a hand – firstly, when I moved the trailer from the remains of the trailers wrecked by the winter storms I gashed a tyre on an angle iron girder which had been used as tie-down and spent most of the afternoon changing the wheel; secondly, we could not find the necessary paperwork to complete the C of A, and thirdly, the Prefect was in the back of the blister hanger and we would have to move all the aircraft out to do the swap. On top of this there were reports from the Mynd that they were snowed in and the first weekend had been cancelled.

After as short discussion with Mike Birch, who was signing the C of A, we decided that since the Tutor already had a C of A, and was still securely packed in the trailer following its return from Czechoslovakia last summer, we would take it in place of the Prefect. The next day I bought a new tyre for the trailer and fitted it in place of the spare, which was a different size to the two road wheels. All lights were checked and found to be working, so we were ready to go.



Pink Tutor

During the week I monitored the weather forecasts and although it had become warm enough to melt the snow fairly quickly, rain, gales and blustery showers were promised for the whole weekend. Since my wife and I already booked and paid for a room in the Crown inn at Wentnor, at the foot of the hill, we decided to go anyway, regardless of the weather. We duly picked up the trailer after work on Friday, once again checked the lights and found one stop light not working. which luckily turned out to be nothing more than a dirty contact, and set off at around 6pm.

On the way there were a couple of heavy showers and by the time we reached Church Stretton at 9pm it was raining steadily and the top of the hill was covered by low cloud. We decided to drive round the hill and leave the trailer at the Inn overnight but on arrival at Asterton the rain had stopped and the sky was clear so I changed my mind and drove up to the club using the front road – no problem for a Landrover in low gear. At the top it was blowing a gale but we managed to find one last ball to hook the trailer up to. We then found that a fleet of rally cars was coming up the front hill and one had broken down halfway up! We reversed back up part way until I could do a three point turn, which I probably would not have tried in daylight, and drove all the way round through Church Stretton again, finally arriving at the Inn just before 11pm.

The next morning we met up with the rest of the Booker crowd i the briefing room. The wind was on the ridge at 25 knots with gusts to 30 knots, a bit too strong for the Tutor we thought, and anyway due to a low cloudbase there was a restriction on the number of gliders in the air. Around midday the wind got even stronger and almost due westerley so out came the bungey. As most of us hand never had a bungey launch before, Dave Caunt and myself had a check in the K-21 before starting to check everyone else, while those who were cleared flew the Junior on the winch or the bungey. All who flew had good soaring flights as in addition to the ridge lift there were strong thermals up to cloudbase which was rising throughout the day.

Sunday dawned with similar weather but the wind was about 10 knots less so after launching the K-21 and Junior we set about rigging the Tutor. This went fairly well considering most people had never seen it before, and the Mynd duty instructor said we could bungey launch it when it was ready. As the tyre pressure was very low we planned to stop by the airline on the way to the bungey point so we strapped John Tournier in (always move gliders with someone in the cockpit is the rule here) and started towing. Unfortunately, the tyre towing crosswind with little air was not on and gave up altogether, just yards from the hanger. No problem said the locals, put it on a dolly and wheel it into the hanger, we've got spare tubes here, and we're not keen on just using the skid as it chews up the ground. With help from various quarters we had the wheel fixed in about an hour.

I had been keeping an eye on the anemometer reading in the hanger and the wind was now a steady 32 knots but when John said he thought the wind was getting stronger I convinced him that it was still OK to launch – the glider would be safer in the air. John strapped in again and we towed him to the bungey point. We didn't really need the bungey now as the wing was strong enough to hand launch, but we decided to stick to the method we knew. To bungey launch, the tail is held high keeping the nose skid on the ground while 3 people on each side of the bungey run down the hill at about 30 degrees either side of the intended flight path until the bungey is at its full stretch, and then the tail is lowered and the bungey accelerates the glider forward until it reaches flying speed, by which time it should be over the edge and in lift. In the case of the Tutor, as the tail was lowered it gracefully rose vertically with almost no forward movement and John was away for an hours soaring.

When John returned it was my turn and the launch went the same way. It was necessary to fly fast to make progress along the ridge and also to retain control in the turbulence low down but it was also possible to slow down in an area of strong lift and climb vertically (or even backwards!) straight up to a cloudbase of 1300'. When gaps started appearing in the cloud later it was possible to go even higher, but unfortunately no wave slots opened up over the site for long enough to make good use of the wave. I landed when one of several light showers passed by, having already flown through one, and I'd been airborne nearly an hour. Dave Caunt and the Mynd CFI and deputy wanted to fly the Tutor.

After a late lunch, Dave asked me to ensure everyone from Booker experienced a bungey launch so I had a couple more flights in the K-21 and the Mynd's K-21 was also utilised. Since this glide has no skid it is held on the wheel brake with the main wheel in a hole in the ground until all is ready. The wheel brake is then released remembering to close and lock the airbrakes at the same time. In the meantime Dave Caunt was developing a new type of circuit for the Tutor, by flying low over the bungey point, then climbing vertically and backwards in the ridge lift until he was in a position to make a straight in approach and landing on top of the hill. While most watched this from the ground, some of us were able to see it from above.

At the end of the day everyone had had a bungey launch and at least one soaring flight and had thoroughly enjoyed themselves as was evidenced by all the smiling faces. The forecast for the following weekend is for similar weather so hopefully this weekend will have as good a time as we did.

Martin Wilton-Jones

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Dear Sir,

Having attended a VGC Rally with my own glider (Sky BGA 694) for the first time, I looked forward to the report in the magazine with special interest. So I was a bit disappointed that we were omitted from the list of those attending the National Rally at Lleweni Parc. The glider was there the whole week, although due to rotten weather I only flew during the first weekend. as you can see, I live fairly locally although I fly at the Mynd, so I went to work that week, intending to take leave if the weather was good. It wasn't!

I think the problem was that there wasn't any form of booking-in or registration for the Rally that I could find. It was rather an historic occasion as far as the Skys are concerned. We had four together, although we couldn't get them all rigged for a photo session at the same time. Richard Moyse put his away while I was still airborne and Brian Middleton had only just arrived. Them Peter Teagle had to go home! At least I have some good photos of mine with Peter's. i think the last time four Sky's were together would be at the British or Argentine Nationals in the late 50s or early 60s!

I have had mine for coming up to 6 months. At the time of the Rally it had just been recovered, and at the moment it is riding out the gales (hopefully) on top of the Mynd. I would really like to keep it somewhere closer to home, under cover, during the winter, but I haven't found anywhere yet. At least the driveway beside our house is long enough to take the trailer with our cars when we have to do some work on it.

Last winter, I started researching the histories of all our UK Skys, out of interest. With the limited number, it seems like a manageable task. I am hoping to spend some more time talking to the other owners; even the quick chat at Lleweni brought forth some useful stuff; eg there were five Skys in the British team in 1952, mine which was loaned by John Furlong and four from Slingsby. I had put those down as the four other UK civilian Skys, but then Peter Teagle showed me his machine's logbook which had no flying in Spain, having been supplied new to Bernard Thomas and partners at Camphill. So my next theory is that the fifth one was the ETPS machine.

I'd like to write a piece for the magazine when I have enough pieces if the jigsaw. In the meanwhile, I'd like to get in touch with "Paddy" Pitt-Roche who was flying my machine in the 1957 Nationals when he took the wings off in a field landing, and John Messervy who was the pilot when it collided with an Eagle (Slingsby!) in cloud. Messervy was a staff instructor at Lasham at the time (1958), originally from New Zealand. I presume Pitt-Roche or his partner had offered him a flight, whereupon he went into cloud and hit the Eagle. The pilots of the latter bailed out; my machine lost 14 feet of wing, but luckily for me it was still controllable (maybe 18 feet of aileron per side has its uses) so he brought it home. His name does not appear before or after that date!

Any way, if you could add our names (Mark Wakem and BGA 694, the blue and white one) to the attendees, honour will be satisfied! (Better still, we are printing your letter – Ed.) Keep up the good work.

Yours Sincerely, *M.P .Wakem.*

ERRORS IN THE LAST VGC NEWS NO.81.

In spite of the greatest editorial efforts, the following names of most esteemed members were spelt apallingly wrong. We extend our apologies to our Swiss Vice President Willi Schwarzenbach, and to our Danish member Niels-Ebbe Gjorup.

HISTORICAL

Concerning Kurt Schmidt and the MU 13.

In I933, Kurt Schmidt was in an SA Sturm in East Prussia. He and others had built a Grunau Baby 2. In this aircraft he flew a World duration Record of 36 hours 36 minutes in slope lift off the sand dunes on the 3rd and 4th August at the Korschenruh gliding site near Koenigsberg. During the nights, two fires marked the edge of the slope. There were white cloths to show wind direction and also signals by morse.

After the landing, he said, smiling that he had hoped to go on flying until the next morning. Sporting Control for this record flight was in the hands of Luftlandesgruppefuhrer Oppermann of East Prussia and he ordered Schmidt to land. In the SA an order was an order and so, as an SA Mann he had to obey against his wishes.

During the whole period of the flight, he never experienced tiredness and he hoped to fly on as the wind was on the slope perfectly. He had a bottle of cherry juice, a pound of apples, 4 Stollen and three bars of chocolate as his food and, at the end of the flight, there was still much of it left. He was especially proud that he and other comrades had built the aircraft. He had experienced no bad moments during the flight. His greatest height had been 315 metres and the beat along the slope had been about two kms. During the next two years, he was engaged in building the second Mu 13, the famous "Atalante". The first Mu 13 was the "Merlin", and therefore may have been the Mu 13A? The "Atalante" could then have been the Mu 13B? With this aircraft, he won the I936 Rhon contest against all the best pilots and sailplanes of Germany. The "Atalante" had trailing edge flaps to further enhance its low speed performance. There also is a report that these could be used differentially. The weather in 1936 was still and hot ie. excellent Mu 13 weather!!! He flew the "Atalante" in the 1937 International Rhon Contest at the Wasserkuppe.

The "Atalante" was now modified with a higher rudder, increased wing dihedral and was repainted (perhaps Bavarian blue?). In these first World Gliding Championships, Kurt Schmidt came 5th behind the Swiss pilot Sandmeier in a Spyr 3. Sandmeier was the great surprise of the Championships.

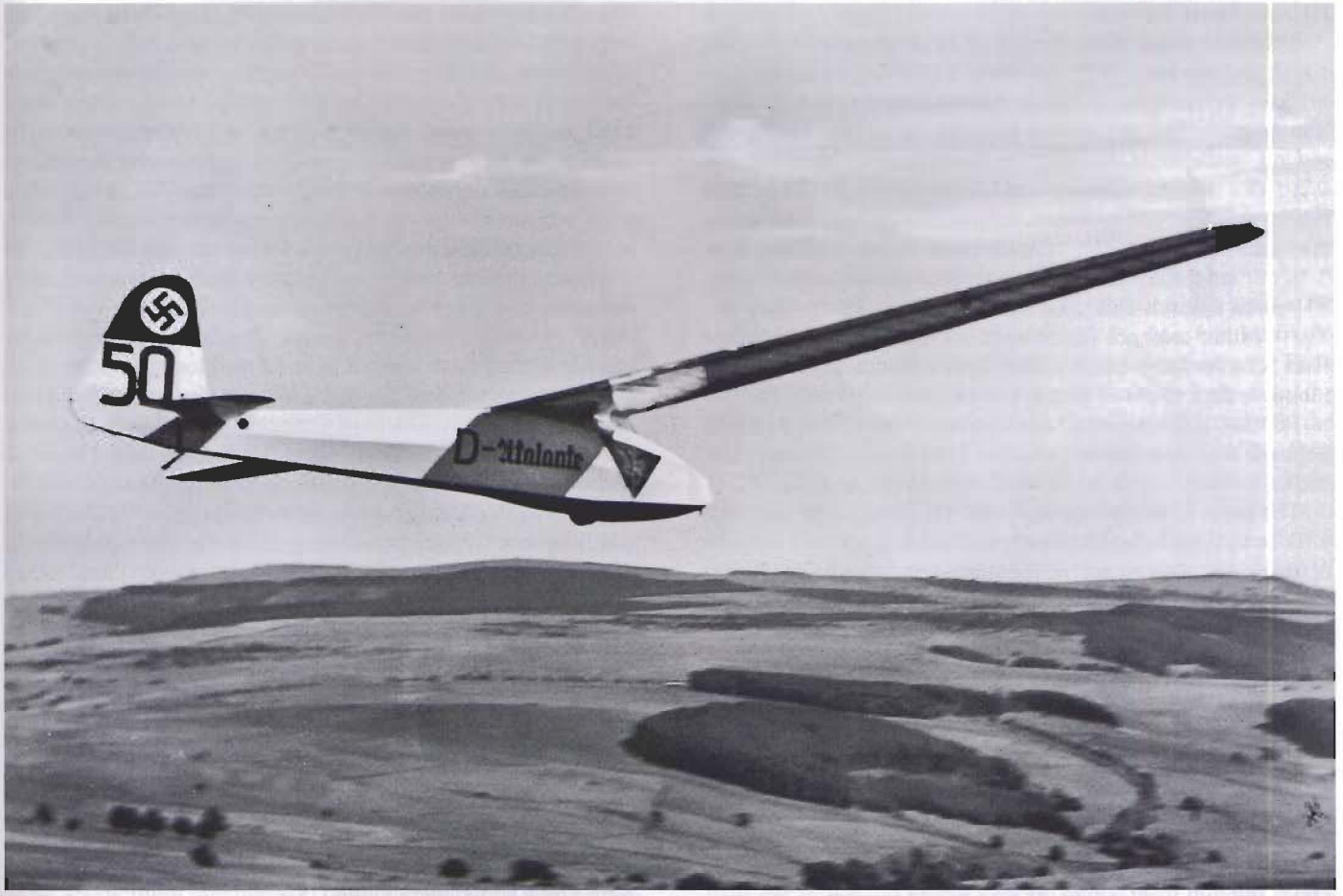
During 1937, the Motor MU came out, and so perhaps this was the MU 13 C ?

In 1938, there were many MU 13Ds. This became the production MU 13 which was built by the firm of Schwarzwald Flugzeugbau Max Prinz zu Furstenberg, Donaueschingen. So possibly the D might even mean Donaueschingen? The production Mu 13Ds did not have flaps. Allotted the RLM type number 108-63, it became the D-3 version in January 1941. By January 1941, 25 D-3 s had been built. By June 1942, 81 D-3 s had been built (source: Unterlagen des RLM GL C -B2 from the Bundesarchiv /Militararchiv Freiburg im Breisgau). This suggests that the first triangular, and longer, fuselaged Mu I3D-3s designed in the same fashion as the fuselages of the Mu 17s by Ludwig Karch, flew first in 1941. How many of the shorter, square cross sectioned fuselage Mu 13 Ds were built by the same firm from I938 is not known but CW guesses that it must have been over 100?

In the 1939 Rhon Contest, 8 Mu 13 Ds, among other sailplane types, were entered in a class for young pilots. This was won by Ingo Pasold in a Mu 13D. Ingo and his brother Rolf, were well known in Britain at that time, where they owned in 1938 the Rhonbussard BGA 395, which has recently been restored to flying condition by the Oldtimer Club Wasserkuppe. Although, Mu 13Ds were entered in the single seater class of the 1939 Rhon Contest, Kurt Schmidt gave up



Kurt Schmidt about to be launched in D-"Atalante" at 1936 Rhön Contest



1936 Rhön Contest D-"Atalante"



1938 Rhön Contest. Kurt Schmidt, Rhönvater Ursinus, Wolfgang Späte

his faithful Mu 13 to fly a new and relatively faster Condor 3. Nevertheless, he once again had to be content with second place behind Erwin Kraft in a Reiher 3.

It was probably in a Mu 13D that Kurt Schmidt fought his greatest battle...in the 1938 Rhon Contest. After two weeks of day and night struggle, his longest distance flight was 415 kms to Bellinchen on the Oder, he was finally beaten in to second place by Wolfgang Spate who was flying the very heavy Reiher V.1. (with a speed to fly calculator ring!!). No Mu 13 was ever fast! During 1939, Kurt Schmidt flew a Mu 13D 487 kms from Trebbin to his adopted home at Holzkirchen in Bavaria.

This was probably the longest distance ever flown in a Mu 13. On the 9th June 1939, there was a goal flight contest from Freiburg in Breisgau to Stettin Altdamm on the Baltic Coast. The 22 pilots had to be observed over, or to land at, the following airfields: Offenberg – Karlsruhe – Mannheim – Wertheim – Bad Kissingham-Meiningen – Erfurt – Bad Frankenhausen – Magdeburg – Brandenburg – Berlin/Rangsdorf and Finowfurt, the total distance being 840kms. Kurt Schmidt won with 560 points ahead of Brautigam – Weihe, 531 pints, Flinsch-D.30 "Cirrus" and Heinz Huth -"Reiher". The weather was not favourable but this may have helped Kurt Schmidt in his Mu 13. Both Kurt Schmidt and Brautigam took five days to cover the course. 14 pilots arrived at Stettin.

For his achievements, mostly flown in a Mu 13, Kurt Schmidt was awarded the "Adolf Hitler Prize of Honour" for 1939.

The point of all the above is that the French took two MU 13D-1s to Pont Saint Vincent from Germany in 1945 and one of them was the winner of the above described Goal Flight Contest. It is believed that Francois Ragot may have that very aircraft now and it is in good condition awaiting restoration. The above information was collected by C.Wills from Peter Riedel's book "Uber Sonnige Weiten" and from Wolf Hirth's "Handbuch des Segelfliegens". Should some of it, not collected from the above books, be wrong, he would gladly be corrected.

Kurt Schmidt was killed on the 8th of March 1944 while test flying the ME 262 V.6 jet fighter at Lechfeld. At that time, the type still had some technical failings and one of them prevented him from baling out.



THE HORSA REPLICA

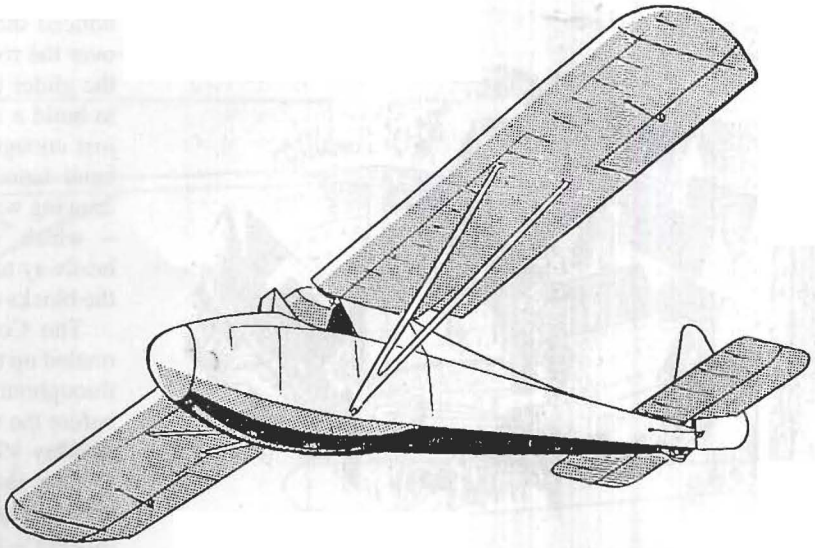
Many were the tales told by the wartime glider pilots. None is more strange that the attempt to construct a replica Horsa in the USA. The drawings had been found in Britain and had been sent to the USA for above purpose by Bob Randall who himself travelled to the USA four times at his own expense to help with the project.

It seems that the American building the Horsa owned a Guatemalan Rain Forest and declared that he would cut some of it down to build the Horsa. However, there was doubt weather the timber would have been approved by the British airworthiness authorities (although there must be timber in the USA which would meet American requirements, and thus be acceptable in Britain... CW). However, not only this, but his workshop was too small but this could have been remedied by removing a wall. The American declared that he would cut down more Guatemalian trees to build the aircraft if he already did not have enough to build the Horsa.

Furthermore his wife was Guatemalan and is likely to become the next President of Guatemala. She has been giving her time to save Guatemalan children who had been left without care in the jungle by the Civil War. She had with difficulty persuaded the US Airforce to fly her in to Guatemala in a helicopter to rescue two children who were thought to be in the jungle. She explained that the helicopter would not have to land as she could climb down a ladder. All this went to plan, except that the helicopter was shot down by the rebels. The crew of the helicopter were made to kneel down and were shot. Luckily, she was not... and the rebels walked her out with the two children. So, apart from the Horsa project, which has been discontinued, their house is overrun with Guatemalan children. It was felt that conditions were not suitable to produce a new Horsa to acceptable British airworthiness requirements using Guatemalan woods.

It is believed that a new WACO Hadian troop carrier has been flown somewhere in the USA.

THE COLDITZ COCK



C. H. Latimer-Needham, MSc(Lond), FRAES, AFAIAA

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In 1941 THE GREEKS, reinforced by a handful of British airmen, were so successfully throwing back the Italian invaders that Hitler decided to intervene and on April 6 the German motorised hordes, with overwhelming Luftwaffe cover, started to move south and swept through the country in a massive offensive, reminiscent of the blitzkrieg in France of less than a year Previously. Hopelessly outnumbered, the Greeks and British fell back after stubborn fighting and on April 23 evacuation was ordered. Those who were unable to find places in the Blenheims for the ferry flights to Crete made their way on foot to Kalamata (Calamity) Bay, whence a miniature "Dunkirk" was enacted by ships of all sorts and sizes, together with Sunderland flying-boats of 228 GR Squadron. The crew of Sunderland T9048 had kept up a day-long shuttle service on April 24, carrying as many as 86 men on a flight, with restricted fuel, between Kalamata and Crete, and had completed their quota of sorties when one more flight to Kalamata was decided upon to pick up the Group captain.

Unfortunately, darkness had fallen and as the flying-boat made water contact it hit some floating object and went straight to the bottom. The captain, Flt Lt H. L Lamond, of New Zealand, the third pilot Flt L. J.E Goldfinch and the fitter, Sgt Davies suffered injuries and and were taken to hospital; the second pilot, F/O Lylian and a warrant officer were killed on impact, and one member, F/O Bristowe escaped unhurt and managed to get to Crete. Thus was started one more epoch of escape history, terminating with a most fantastic "Daedalean" attempt, which proved that truth is stranger than mythology.

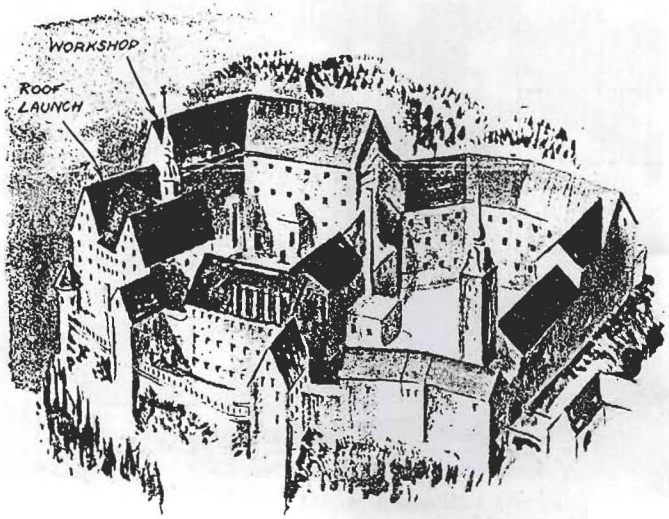
The injured men were cared for in the town hospital and Bill Goldfinch was operated on because of spitting blood, although nothing of a serious nature was found. Here they joined company with Flt Lt J.W.Best of No 39 squadron, who had force-landed his Maryland on May 8, also at Kalamata, due to shortage of fuel. Bill Goldfinch, Henry Lamond and Jack Best were deported, first to Stalag Luft I at Barth and later at Stalag Luft III at Sagan, some 80 miles south-east of Frankfurt.

In May 1942, Lamond, Goldfinch and Best engineered the first escape from the Sagan prison by 'moling'. Starting at the washhouse soakaway, a tunnel was formed and when its length extended to about 50ft, a stock of food was laid in and and they then entered the tunnel and started to dig methodically and without due hurry to move the tunnel by passing the earth back to seal the entrance, and in this way the team slowly moved toward and beyond the camp perimeter. Bill Searcey, an Australian, helped with the initial digging and finally made good the soak-away sealing.

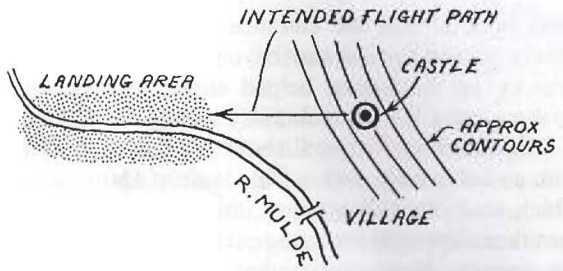
The tunnel was 'moved' about 25ft during the first evening, with air holes made with a table knife at 15ft to 20ft intervals, which also supplied a faint glimmer of light, and the three men then slept with two lying side by side and the third on top for warmth. Next day another 75ft took them about 12ft beyond the barbed wire – the last air hole between the double perimeter wires had been enlarged to check the navigation and bearings – and the molers then rested until dark, when Bill dug the last few feet and, when the guard had marched to the end of his beat, emerged, to be followed by Henry and Jack.

The original plan was to get to an airfield, help themselves to a German aircraft and fly to Sweden, and they had supplied themselves with the German words to help identify the various 'taps', controls and instruments. Arriving at the airfield at dawn, they secreted themselves within one of a number of glider trailers, but in the morning the local air cadets arrived and started flying training with the gliders. By good fortune the escapers had chosen an empty trailer, but it was a long, hot day of suspense, heightened every time the cadets approached their trailer, and it was not until the evening departure that they were able to breathe freely. Then it was found that all aircraft were securely locked in the hangers and therefore they agreed to push on through the night towards the River Oder, continuing to follow the river east to Glogau, which was reached by dawn. Some potatoes were pulled from the ground for breakfast and some time was spent in finding a boat that was not padlocked, which was promptly launched downstream towards Stettin, a distance of nearly 200 miles, beyond which the open Baltic lay a further 50 miles or so, followed by a further 100 miles across the open Baltic to Denmark. "It really was delightful rowing gently downstream" said Jack Best. Instead of waiting under cover until nightfall the daylight sortie was their undoing, for the owner of the boat discovered his loss and reported it to the police, which resulted in recapture. And so ended this gallant attempt, by which the escapers qualified for Colditz.

Oflag IV C, named by the German Straflger, was considered an impregnable fortress, with a garrison more numerous than the officer prisoners incarcerated therein. Qualifications



Drawings of Colditz Castle based on a photograph and showing the launch point and (below) the expected landing area



THE COLDITZ COCK . . .

for residence was at least one escape from other POW camps and thus the complement comprised a collection of experts, whose main occupation was devising means of escape. Despite the ring of sentries with machine guns and rifles, moats, barbed wire, floodlighting and microphones everywhere, tunnels were driven in all directions, keys to all doors were forged, German uniforms and civilian clothing were expertly made and many escape attempts contrived: descent by ropes, jumping high wall, climbing the barbed wire; a few successful, but most abortive – within the castle precincts or as far off as the German border. As time progressed escape became more and more difficult: holes were plugged, sentries doubled, precautions redoubled, and all the while greater ingenuity was shown by the 'Men of Spirit' as they were called.

Jack Best, of the RAFVR, who had farmed in Kenya, made a daring escape in November 1943, with Michael Sinclair as partner, Mike having been captured at Calais in 1940, with two escapes already to his credit. They took with them a pair of wire-cutters made by Bill Goldfinch, in preference to a factory-made pair that was available, and Bill also cut the window bars through which the escape was made. By remarkable determination they scaled and cut their way out, dodged a hail of bullets and got clean away, only to be captured three days later, walking down the main street at Reine, only 25 miles from the Dutch frontier, and returned to Colditz under armed escort. Mike Sinclair eventually met his death by shooting, when climbing the wire fence, on September 25, 1944, on his fourth attempt.

First thoughts of an aerial escape occurred to Bill Goldfinch as he stood at the window of Keith Milne's room (a Canadian from Saskatoon) early in the winter of 1943-44 and noticed that the snow flakes were taking an upward course over the roof, his mind going back to the day he had spent in the glider trailer during the Sagan escape. The idea then was to build a single-seat, skeletal type glider, which would have just enough room to sit on the sloping-roof platform,and to hand launch it into a strong wind. A general arrangement drawing was prepared, but the scheme did not progress further – which was perhaps just as well, because insufficient headway to clear the treacherous air currents in the vicinity of the blocks of buildings was likely to have resulted.

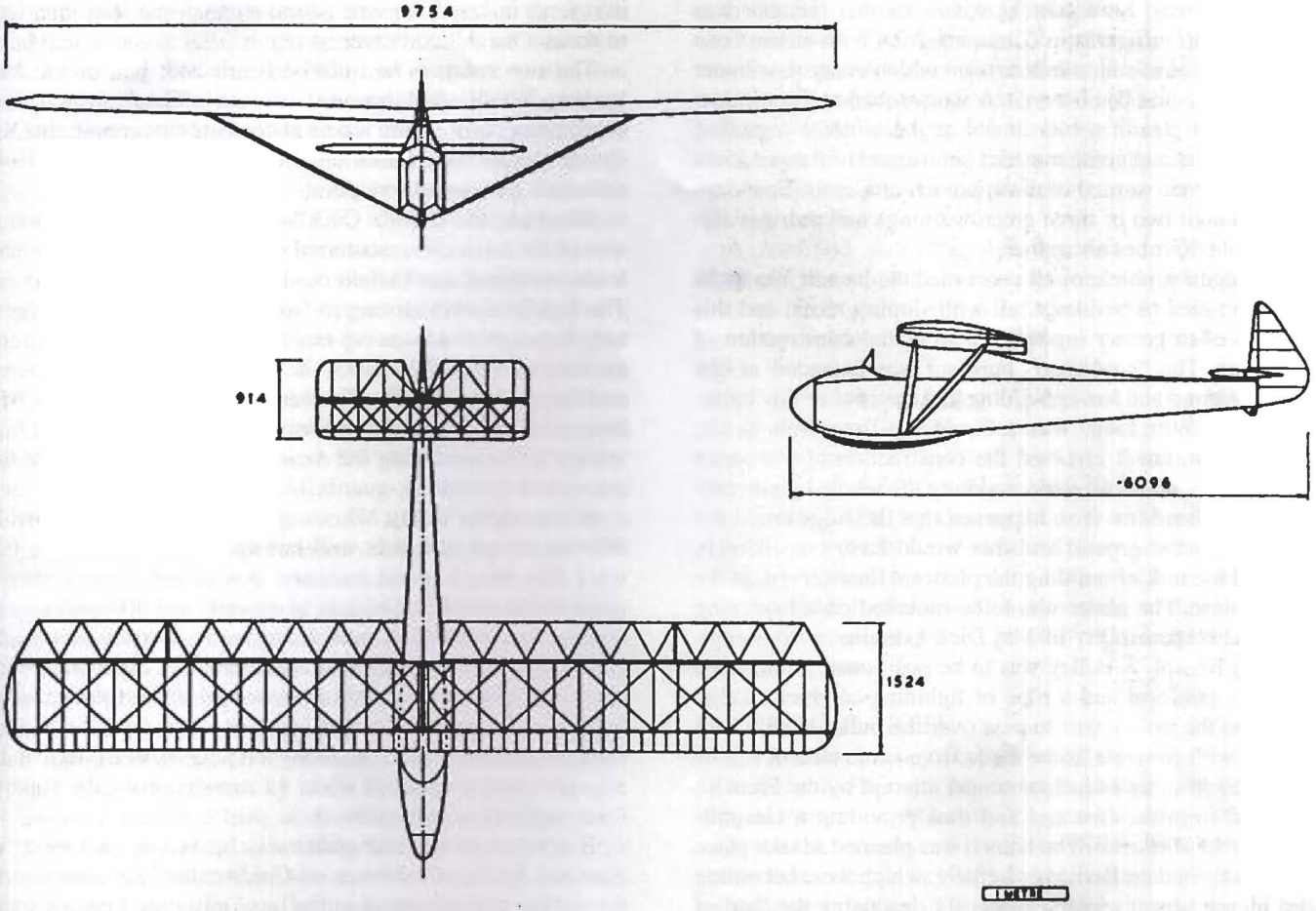
The Cock project was initiated by Lt A.P.R.Rolt, who rustled up the team of workers, and security men which he led throughout. Tony Rolt, Rifle Brigade, who had achieved fame before the war as a motor racing driver, was captured in Calais on May 1940, during the Dunkirk evacuation, and arrived at Colditz in July 1943, after walking out from Oflag VIIB, Eichstatt, accompanied by three others in the guise of German officers – his eighth escape attempt. Bill Goldfinch took the role of designer, working in close collaboration with Jack Best, in charge of construction, in which capacity he made good use of his youthful experience on his father's farming and timber estate in Wales, prior to his emigrating to Kenya.

P.R Reid, also captured during the fighting in the vicinity of Dunkirk, became escape officer at Colditz until he made a successful getaway in October 1942, and wrote in The Latter Days that 'Goldfinch and Best were probably the two finest craftsmen in the camp' and of Goldfinch he said: "His inner strength, the peculiar tough fibre which has nothing to do with mental equanimity, only made itself felt after long contact with his personality. He was the type of man who would survive in a lifeboat after weeks of exposure, long after the other occupants had gone overboard."

The success of prison escapades of this sort depends greatly upon the institution of a proper system of look-out and signalling, in order that those involved in the project shall not be taken unawares and that no tell-tale activities, objects or noises may be discernible by the guards ("Goons"), together with scrounging or bartering for the vital materials, bits of equipment and tools. The security team comprised roughly 40 men and was in charge of Capt David Walker and later, Lieut Geoffrey Wardle, of RN Submarines, who had made a getaway in September 1942, but was recaptured next day.

The Colditz Cock was designed as a strutted, parasol-wing glider of 32ft span, giving a wing area of 162sq ft, with an estimated tare weight of 240lb (probably exceeded) and an all-up weight, with two occupants, of about 560lb. The design was original, except that the rudder shape was based on the prewar Luton Buzzard, as it was considered that this was a proven control: details were obtained from Newnes Airframes, Part II. The chosen aerofoil section was Clark YH and when Bill Goldfinch was asked how they obtained the ordinates and aerodynamic data, he replied casually: "From your book Aircraft Design – we had books you know."

Construction started at the beginning of 1944 with the provision of a suitable workshop. Two garret storeys above the British sleeping quarters, over the chapel, were vacant and unused and the end part of the top most floor was partitioned off and camouflaged to supply a workshop roughly 10ft x 30ft at floor level. The false wall was prefabricated in sections of three-ply and cardboard, on a framework of floor boarding covered with palisade material, coated with a layer of plaster and coloured to match the old walls. It was erected by 12 men in one night, this being necessary in order to avoid detection. Entry was gained by means of a ladder and the trapdoor. Stairs



to the garret were situated at the other end of the building and a glance through the door was sufficient to satisfy a visiting goon as to the nonexistence of any untoward activity, without the need to walk to the far end, some 60ft off, although on one occasion the guards approached the false wall and tapped it.

A complete set of carpenter's tools was improvised by Jack Best; saws made from gramophone spring with beechwood handles from a bed-board; planes from broken table knives set in beechwood stocks;wood drills and bradawls made from long nails; and iron bars from stoves as hammers. They were able to drill metal and therefore all fittings with holes meant finding suitable pieces of metal with holes in approximately the correct positions, though holes could be enlarged with a round file. Glue and pins were obtained by barter, mostly by Flt Lt "Czecho" Chaloupka. The wing spars, of rectangular or plank section, 3/4in thick, and the longerons were made, each in one length without splice, from floor boards of an inch or so in thickness, whilst most of the secondary structure material came from bed boards. Asked what happened when the Germans discovered some of the floorboards were missing, Goldfinch stated: "The Goons just had to make the necessary repairs." The age and condition of the timber were unknown quantities and therefore specimens were subjected to bend tests and gave the surprisingly high figure of about 10,000lb/sq in. Blue and white check mattress covering was used for covering wings and fuselage, which was treated with dope made form boiled millet: the millet formed part of the food ration and was ground fine, boiled in water for four hours to form a paste and then applied hot. This made the fabric drum tight for about 12 hrs and redoping was to have taken place shortly before the launch.

Good quality beech plywood was obtained from cabinets in the favoured senior officers' quarters, the Saalhaus, but as this was about 3mm thick one of the outer layers was peeled off for such items as rib gussets. The bolts for wing and lift strut attachments came from the senior officers' beds and metal fittings were made from heavy gauge sheet contained in the cabinets already mentioned. The door hinges served as control hinges. Field telephone cable, used as lighting conduit in the castle, served for the control cables. Sqn Ldr "Lucie" Lockett who met his death in a Tri-Pacer on the approach to Guernsey some 18 months ago, was responsible for making all metal fittings.

VITAL SECURITY

In an endeavour of this sort, security, for in its military meaning, plays the bigger part; the scope for constructional workers on a single project in confined quarters is insufficient to keep employed more than a handful of personnel, but their security tentacles have to extend far in all directions. There was a cross-tie beam in the roof space over the workshop and this provided a suitable perch for the immediate look out man, as often as not Stooge Wardle himself; here he sat for hours with one of the roofing tiles wedged open as spy hole. His

view was severely restricted, but his attention was riveted on a window on the third floor of another building located closer to the prison guards' headquarters, where another member was posted who, in turn, was in communication with at least one other watcher at a front window from which every movement of the Goons could be observed. A white towel at the window indicated "all clear"; a blue towel at the window signalled cease and silence; a green mustard pot warned of danger and a red metal salt jar warned of the approach of Goons. Few days passed without two or three green warnings and red was signalled about 30 times altogether.

The biggest problem of all concerned the launch into flight from a complex of buildings, all with sloping roofs, and this called for even greater ingenuity than actual construction of the aircraft. The "workshop" building was extended at one end by a second and lower building and the roof of this building, roughly 60ft long, was selected by Tony Rolt as the launching site, but it involved the construction of a wooden trestle runway, about 4ft wide, saddling the whole length, prefabricated in sections. It so happened that the ridge could not be seen from the ground and this would have considerably simplified the task of building the platform unobserved, at the requisite time. The glider was to be mounted on a launching trolley, the responsibility of Maj Dick Lorraine, a civil engineer from Bristol. A pulley was to be positioned at the outer end of the platform and a rope of lightning-conductor cable attached to the trolley was to pass over the pulley with a bath tub filled with concrete, to be made from some tons of rubble (still stored from an audacious tunnel attempt by the French), suspended from the free end and thus providing a catapult-launch run of 40ft or so. The launch was planned to take place during an air raid on Berlin, or Leipzig, which were becoming frequent, but nevertheless schemes for deadening the thud of the bath tub and for providing diversionary noises formed part of the plot.

Positioning the glider meant first cutting a hole in the garret floor, through which the parts were to be lowered to the floor and then a second opening through the gable end by the roof platform. The lift-struts were to be hinged to the wing panels so that assembly merely meant connecting the wings to fuselage and raising them to allow the lift-struts to be pinned to the fuselage and adding the tail units.

A model of the Cock was made by "Hoofy" Barnes to test the flight characteristics and this was audaciously launched from one of the upper windows into the courtyard below and, in the words of Bill Goldfinch, "it glided in beautifully to land at the feet of the Goon on guard." There was even a plan, by Lt "Scarlet" O'Hara, to produce a petrol engine for increased range, but this project never got under way.

Colditz castle is situated on the spur of a hill, which conferred the advantage of initial height for the launch, whilst the chosen landing area, beyond the castle boundary, was alongside, or even in, the River Mulde, some 300ft below and 300 yd distant, where it curves away from the castle towards the north-west and which would provide a landmark even on the darkest night.

Construction proceeded steadily throughout the 1944 and was completed by the end of the year, when "the stage was set for the greatest escape in history," to quote again from The Latter Days. When the Normandy landing took pace, the advisability of continuing had been questioned and its future was again reviewed upon completion, when a coded order from the War office requested no further escape attempts in view of Hitler's orders for all recaptured prisoners to be shot out of hand; but Col "Willie" Todd (Royal Scots Fusiliers), Senior British Officer, decided that the glider should be held in reserve in case it became necessary to dispatch an emissary to contact the Allied Forces.

The two escapers had not been selected, but, of the four leaders, Wardle had become "escape officer", which precluded him from taking a part and it is pretty certain that the choice would have fallen on Bill Goldfinch and Tony Rolt, with Jack Best as reserve pilot.

However, the Colditz Cock was never put to the supreme test of its hazardous nocturnal flight and so Daedalus and Icarus remained fast in their castle until Colditz was liberated. The Russians were closing in from the east and Gen Hodges' task forces were advancing rapidly from the west and, on the morning of April15th, 1945, the Americans entered the town and relieved the prison. The same afternoon the glider was assembled and a long queue formed to inspect the strange bird in their midst, including the American troops and some of the astonished German ex-guards.

It is a soldier's duty, when captured, to take all reasonable steps to escape and, it is well known, the British POWs fulfilled this duty in good measure. But of still greater importance is the avoidance of loss of morale, and it is endeavours of this sort, which tax human ingenuity, improvisation and skill to the utmost, that make such valuable contributions to the sanity of an active body of men who suffer from extreme frustration of immobility and inactivity at a time when their services are so sorely needed. By keeping 40 or 50 men fully engaged over a period of some 12 months or so, the Colditz Cock served this purpose well.

It is believed that the glider was broken up and used for firewood by the inhabitants of Colditz; but one component, the rudder, was preserved in the local museum. Perhaps some of our replica enthusiasts will reconstruct the Cock and put its flying capabilities to the test, although there was never any doubt of its flight characteristics. Bill Goldfinch suggests that Colditz Museum might hand over the rudder "with Due ceremony", so that at least on original component could be incorporated.

To satisfy himself that the part he played in the project would have received ARB approval, Bill Goldfinch is now engaged on the construction of a Luton Minor, tc be named Spirit of Colditz to commemorate the most fantastic and daring escape attempt of the war.

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

THE SOVIET A-9 SAILPLANE.

For many years, information concerning the ROT FRONT 7 sailplane, in which Olga Klepikova had flown 749 kms in 1939, was unknown to the Western World. Here was a sailplane which had sensationally broken the World Distance record for men and women, flown by a Russian girl, and none knew anything about the aircraft. The record stood for over 15 years. Asking Soviet glider pilots if they could help us, all that we could discover was that it was similar to the A-9 which was designed by O.K.Antonov in 1948. The A-9 was known to C.Wills who had seen one in the hangar at Leszno in 1958. Then, at last, through a Hungarian contact we were able to discover in 1983, from an East German book the details of the ROT FRONT-7.

It was indeed similar to the A-9, being designed by the same designer, but was more refined having a retracting undercarriage, provision for water ballast, and a wing centre section tapering in plan form. The VGC felt very priviledged,

that through the help of our Hungarian member Gabor Fececs, it was able to for the first time, shed light on the RF-7, and to share it with the western world. Indeed, but for the VGC, information on the RF-7 might never have come out and there was the feeling that together with our fantastic restoration achievements and Rallies, that once again the VGC had justified its existence. It has long been the impression that in Communist Russia, there was great uniformity concerning everything i.e. that all communists should have to fly the same aircraft. The book "Planyeri CCCR" by A.P. Krasilshchikov gives very much the opposite impression. There were so many designs and all of them were never built in quantity.

The RF-7 broke records for distance, goal flight (343 kms), gain of height (3,388 m), and out & return 94.8 kms but only five of them were ever built. It was very fast, having a wing loading of 27 to 37 kgs/sq.m (5.5 lbs- 7.585 lbs/sq.ft) without and with water ballast. Its max. L:D was 1:30.5. The aircraft was built of wood which before I941 was in general use for glider construction in the USSR.

During the war starting in 1941, all sailplanes were destroyed in Russia except for a very few which were taken to Hungary.

Although there were reports of an RF-7 being in Hungary, which was destroyed in an aerotowing accident over Budapest Airport in 1943, this is not true. The sailplane was a GN-7, the great 650km world distance record sailplane flown by Victor Rastorgueff in 1937. In fact, Victor Rastorgueff managed three distance flights in one week in a GN-7 and all of them were further than the existing world distance record.

During the austere time after 1945, a new gliding movement was created in Russia with new sailplanes. At first the proven wooden construction was used but by 1957, Antonov started designing sailplanes in metal which were similar in form to his wooden A-9.

We have no constructional details of the RF-7, but we do have them for the A-9, which was similar to the RF-7 but simplified.

Gone were the water ballast tanks and the retracting undercarriage. The wing centre section was of rectangular plan form replacing the RF-7's tapered planform centre section. The A-9 had no landing skid. It had a rigid keel built into the fuselage. The pilot was spared the shocks on landing by a very well sprung seat! Furthermore, it was then common practice to retrieve sailplanes in the Soviet Union by putting them on lorries! With the RF-7 and A-9, all that was done to derig them was to remove their outer wing panels. The wing centre section and tailplane were built on to the fuselage and could not be removed. Thus the sailplane, with its wing tips removed, had to be lifted on to a lorry and roads in Russia were wider than its centre section! Whereas the RF-7 weighed 245 kgs (539 lbs) empty without water ballast, the A-9 weighed 360 kgs (792 lbs) empty and this confronted would-be lifters with a considerable athletic feat to lift it on to a lorry, even without its outer wing panels. There had been only five RF-7s built in 1938, 27 A-9s were built in 1948 and these were the standard high performance sailplanes used in contests and for record attempts in the Soviet Union, until the arrival of the 200 all metal A.IIs in 1957 and the later arrival en masse of the Blaniks from Czechoslovakia. However, back to the A-9, in which we see the ghost of the prewar RF-7. The A-9 had a massive main wing spar and the aircraft was so fast that it had become known in Poland at Leszno, where it had been flown by Soviet competition pilots, as "the destroyer" (which presumably refered to the ship type, rather than it as a demolisher of other aircraft!) The 27 A-9s were built during the progress of five years in a factory at Novosybirsk and, as with the RF-7 A-10 and A-11, the wing profile R-111 was used modified. The A-9 that C.Wills saw in 1958 at Leszno was finished in rough surfaced military camouflage paint ie. brown upper surfaces and blue lower surfaces.

The A-9 was designed to be flown in very good soaring conditions. Its max.L/D of 1:28 was less than that of the RF-7 but this did not prevent it from setting up a number of World Gliding records.

A modified A-9, the A-9 bis was designed by Oleg Antonov. Its wing was in two parts and was without a centre section. Furthermore, the wing was mechanized (ie.variable geometry, fowler flaps?). The A-9 bis started its test flying in 1955.

As if the A-9's wing loading was not high enough, a two seater version of it, with pilot and passenger seated back to back, was designed in 1952 by O.K Antonov. This type, known as the A.10, set up records for two seater gliders, including one of 829.8 kms on the 26th of May 1953. For this flight, from near Moscow to near Stalingrad, the pilot Master of Sport V. Ilchenko received the Lilienthal Prize. His passenger was G.M. Pechnikov. Ilchenko came to the 1954 World gliding Championships at Camphill to describe his flight to those taking part.

TECHNICAL NOTE

from Mike Birch, one of our technical representatives.

In the unlikely event of a vintage glider being without any hope of restoration, Mike Birch urges that at least its metal fittings should be removed (as Philip Wills did with a WEIHE on the Wasserkuppe in 1945) and placed in an oil soaked sack for their preservation. The metal fittings are the most important parts of a glider and their existance could lead to the eventual recreation of the aircraft.

CLASSIFIED – FOR SALE



FOR SALE: SLINGSBY SKYLARK IIB. This excellent sailplane, (above) lovingly cared for and complete with a full set of instruments comprising: Alitimeter, Airspeed Indicator, Winter Vario, Electric Audio Vario, Turn & Slip, Airpath Compass suuported by 12 volt Battery System. Fitted with Dart Canopy. New C of A. Price including trailer £3250.00. SLINGSBY SWALLOW fully reconditioned with basic instruments. New C of A. Price including trailer £2500.00. Please telephone 0890 870666 for further details.

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Please note that the VGC Annual General Meeting has been rescheduled to take place at 6pm on Sunday 7th August at Lasham Airfield during the International Rally

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From Mike Beach: "Unfortunately, I have less and less spare time and need to 'thin' out my collection. available immediately are the RHEINLAND and SCUD II, both are unique and of the greatest historic importance. As an example, the SCUD II was constructed in 1932 and has recently been totally rebuilt. It is England's oldest airworthy glider and flies surprisingly well. Virtually every famous pre-war English pilot flew it and the first one was Kit Nicholson. An incredible machine from the pioneer days of gliding – a treasure (see Aeroplane monthly April 1992). Other machines will be following from my collection, all are unique with impeccable promenance." Mike Beach, 24, Cole Park Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, England, TW1 1HN. Tel./Fax: 081 892 0409.
VINTAGE VIDEO: Photo record on 8mm and stills of over 32 VGC rallies and activities from 1972 to 1992. 2 hours 45 minutes, VHS only. £12 plus £2 postage. Ted Hull, 30 Bramley Close, London, N14 4HJ



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Offers invited for any of above to: Martyn Webb, Inkerman Cottage, 67a, Wood Green, Witney, Oxon, OX8 6DB. Tel: 0993 774274

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Rear Cover: Ted Hull's Scud 3 in action at Haddenham. Photo C. Wills

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