



The Grapevine

The newsletter for East Sussex Gliding Club

Christmas 2010

Another old-timer destined to fly at Ringmer



Olympia 2b (BLN) BGA No 1055 has been acquired by Jon Stiles and brought to Ringmer. Jon, a keen aeromodeller, having watched the restoration progress on Terence Henderson's Oly, has concluded that, in terms of construction and building techniques, it is not unlike a big model aeroplane and therefore within his capabilities to maintain.

The photo was taken at the Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club's site at Camp Hill at a vintage rally in 2009.

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FROM THE EDITOR

I hope that there won't be too many groans of disapproval from the glass enthusiasts when you read this edition. There is a significant and, I believe, increasing contingent of committed wood-and-fabric aficionados at Ringmer who, with the prospect of some form of Olympic recognition in 2012, are striving to restore and make airworthy some memorable old aeroplanes. More of this within and particular acknowledgements to Terence Henderson for his considerable and varied input.

A reminder to Duty Pilots. You may not think that it's my place to air this subject but, as JJ and I arrived simultaneously at the club on Tuesday last (14th) we found several keys missing from the key box in the clubhouse, the New Hangar unlocked, the Old Hangar locked with its key inside in the transport key box and the Control Caravan unlocked with the missing keys inside, tailgate unlocked and not plugged into the mains. The reverse of the End of Flying Report has a detailed check list that should have ensured that all these oversights did not occur. The safety audit at the beginning of November commended the club on this form and intend to recommend its adoption and use by other clubs as a safety/security measure. Let's use it properly.

Graham Bartle



THE VIEW FROM THE OFFICE WINDOW

After a very long haul, we finally have a completely green airfield. This is something I have never seen before. Indeed, it will take some getting used to every time we join the circuit – if we can find it in the first place.

The project commenced in the last century (the planning application was made in 1998) and sometimes it feels like it, but this winter is the nadir, from now on it can only get better.

I would like thank Steve Bidwell who has been managing the project for the last 5 years. We would have been poorly placed without his knowledge and expertise especially in managing contractors and planning officials.

However, we must not forget the endeavours and vision of someone who is no longer with us. I mean, of course, Tony Kerwin-Nye. I really wish he could have looked out of the Office window now and seen how his initial efforts have been realised. We should not forget him.

Everybody in the club deserves a pat on the back for their patience and perseverance. It has not been easy coping with the restrictions forced upon us, especially for so long, but you are still here – well done.

Next year things will be different. Nobody yet knows in what way but we must work at it together.

We have the opportunity in the next few months to prepare for the new season so now is the time to start planning. We are already working on some ideas.

What would really help us would be if you have any ideas or suggestions on how we could make your Club work better or help you participate more, please let us know.

The Committee and the Instructors are never shy in putting forward their ideas but it is just as important that every member should have their say. It matters not how long you have been with us – let's be hearing from you.

A quick foot note – "I am all in favour of progress - it's change I am against."

John Weddell

LONG MYND 2010

After a bit of last minute decision making, we opted for the third week in October. Last year we went for the last week but found accommodation was scarce due to School holidays.

Guess what? Accommodation was still scarce. However we managed to book the same five bedroom property that we stayed in last year which was basic but comfortable.

Those attending were myself, Andy and Irene Jupp, Peter Crouch (ours, not the footballer), Terry Banks and Nick Cosmos.

Weather-wise for once we chose a good week, mainly westerlies which were needed for the ridge, some northerlies but great weather. The weeks flying consisted of Thermal, Ridge and Wave which together made for some good flights.

Saturday night at the Mynd is social night, which consists of a gathering of guests, members and ex members for dinner. Being guests we were requested to stand on our chairs and introduce ourselves individually. On stating that I came from Brighton, my sexual preferences were immediately brought into question. I informed the gathering that only 1 in 3 from Brighton were gay and that Andy and myself were both straight. Pete turned up the next morning and wondered why he was being given a wide berth.

The flying week started on Saturday with check flights from different launch positions and landing options. Notably, downhill landings, uphill landings and heather landings, my first land ahead option was a heather landing. Having got over that we were left to fend for ourselves but with very good briefings and advice from Dave the duty instructor for the week. Fending for ourselves included sheep bothering, driving the retrieve winch and all the usual jobs on the field .

Andy and myself took 567 and Pete took his machine, Nick hired their Discus and Terry got in to what ever he could. I had a great flight with Terry in a K21 one evening on one of his sky hooks.

Short westerly winch launches are something else to try! On one day the wind was westerly at about 25kts (ie directly on to the ridge). The winch is positioned on the edge of the ridge and the launch point is about 200 yards back. You don't rotate to the full climb. At about 200/300 feet the winch cuts the power, the glider back releases, nose down, over the edge, hit the lift (hopefully), turn left and away you go. Approach speed is normal approach speed + wind speed = 75kt in most cases that day. Then find a gap between the sheep and land (baa)

One of the highlights of the week was the food , Dave the duty instructor doubles as the chef in the club house canteen and on steak night produced one of the best steaks I have ever had.

My lasting recollection of the Mynd that week would be, as the sun was going down, looking down on the field full of sheep and thinking where on earth am I going to land?

All in all it was much more than just a great week's flying, we seem to be building a good relationship with the Midland Club and I would recommend it .

Dave White (with adjustments by Andy Jupp)



LAWS AND RULES

Laws and Rules for Glider Pilots 17th Edition costs £5.00 per copy if you buy it individually from the BGA, however, I can get it in batches of 10 for £3.52 per copy. So let me know if you want a copy and I'll put in a bulk order.

Graham Northcott

BURSARIES

Royal Aero Club Trust

The Royal Aero Club Trust is seeking applications from 16 to 21-year-olds for financial assistance to further their air sport or aviation aspirations. Applications must be submitted through the Club as sponsors by the end of March 2011. James Gair-Stevens was successful in obtaining a Bursary earlier this year which helped him with his NPPL training. So, talk to James!

Ed

de Havilland Educational Trust

The de Havilland Educational Trust is seeking applications for the 2011 award of Fiona McKay Flying Bursaries and Engineering Bursaries. The Trust will award flying bursaries to fund 10 hours of conversion and consolidation flying on a Tiger Moth. The aim of the Bursaries is to encourage licensed pilots to develop an interest and the necessary skills in handling vintage aircraft and to ensure those skills are passed on to future generations. Applicants must have a minimum of 75 hours P1 on powered aircraft (including Motor Gliders and "Fixed-Wing" Microlights). There is no age limit. Please refer to the dH Moth Club website for full details.

The Trust will also offer a number of Engineering Bursaries to applicants with an interest in the restoration, maintenance and repair of vintage aircraft and engines. Applicants will be required to provide a plan for their advancement in this field and show how a Bursary would help. Previous recipients have received funds to attend LAA training courses, buy Manuals, buy tools, spend time on work experience with vintage restoration companies, and gain engineering qualifications. There is no age limit. Again, please refer to dH Moth Club website for full details.

2010's winners included a young aircraft engineer from Deanland – his was the highest award to an engineer.

Terence Henderson



SAFETY AND THE K21

For those members that don't have access to GASIL leaflets or who choose not to read them, it's worth mentioning a recent observation regarding daily inspections of the K21.

A pilot who carried out an inspection, when checking one of the wing main pins, had checked only that the red safety clip was holding the pin handle and had failed to notice that the pin itself was not correctly inserted. The misalignment was found subsequently by another pilot.

It was deemed unlikely that the misalignment would have caused serious problems as the pin was difficult to move during rectification. However, a reminder to "check, not assume" is appropriate.

Mike Ryan



IDLE MUSINGS ON A SNOWY AFTERNOON.

The last time I remember snow this early was in 1967. I had just completed my course at the College of Air Training in Hamble and it was the day before our Graduation Ball. Cadets were being despatched to complete vital tasks in the preparations only to disappear into the snow for hours on end. Surprising, all eventually came good and we all enjoyed a superb weekend of celebration.

Too much, in fact, as first thing Monday morning was our final Signals Test. Morse code audio and lights at 6 wpm with a hangover was too much and the whole course failed – much to our hilarity and the Instructor's ire.

The first airfield at Hamble was established in 1912 and it had a long and distinguished history before closing in 1986 when it was sold for development.

The majority of BEA and BOAC pilots were trained at the College from 1960 until 1984. The cadets proudly graduated with a commercial licence with instrument rating with 250 hrs and were taken on as lowly second officers. Universally, we were known as Hamsters, among other slightly less polite titles! We had two years in which to pass the airline transport pilot's licence theory exams. These were a repeat of our finals at Hamble but you can forget a lot in two years. Back then, we had to contribute towards our training costs, £1000 over 5 yrs. Doesn't sound much but at the start it represented about 12.5 % of salary.

I still have my old 500,000 chart of Southern England. The airspace is somewhat different and the gliding site near Lewes nestled on the Downs at Bo Peep. I am not proud to remember that I was totally oblivious of gliders in those days. We were fortunate to be located on the south coast. Our primary training was over the Isle of Wight and initially our navigation exercises were around Hampshire, Sussex and Kent with the occasional scary excursion to the North. Flying the twins was more adventurous as we were flying on airways. On arrival at Gatwick, East Midlands or Birmingham we would fully explore the various instrument approaches. The controllers must have dreaded hearing us calling up! Towards the end of the course these approaches would always end up the same; a simulated engine failure on the practise overshoot at about 250 ft followed by a single engine approach and landing. It was hard work!

As a reward occasionally we would fly to Jersey or Dinard for lunch but what gave us the best thrill was to take one of the brand new Piper Aztecs on a solo cross-country. They did not have the garish day-glow college markings of the other twins so you were not immediately marked down as a cadet. It did lift our morale!

I have been asked whether I enjoyed my time at Hamble. Time is a great healer. Although there were some good times, I think we all found the constant pressure wearing as our progress with the flying course and ground school was constantly being checked and reviewed. The constant thought that one could easily be "here today, gone tomorrow" if one failed to pass one the progress checks. We lost six cadets on our course while the course ahead lost 16, so it could be said we were lucky. It tended to concentrate the mind!

That brings me to the question I was asking myself a few weeks ago on the way to Hus Bos with Clive.

What on earth possessed me to decide to undertake an Assistant Instructor Course? The memories of Hamble must have faded; I had many years of experience as a "Full cat on 747's". Why should I put myself through it all again especially when I qualify for the winter fuel allowance and the OAP is not far off?

There were a variety of reasons. I was curious to see if I could do it. I knew I would benefit from the experience whatever the outcome. It was time I had a new challenge.

I also had doubts. We all remember Donald Rumsfeld, "There are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns -- the ones we don't know we don't know."

He was absolutely correct. This would be an opportunity to find out how much I did not know!

If it didn't work out, never mind, I could concentrate on my own flying with the benefit of what I had learned on the course. This was my defence mechanism slipping into place – "Never mind" is a lie, in reality I would mind a lot but not until afterwards!

So did I enjoy the experience at Hus Bos? It was so different to Hamble but there was still pressure but in a very different way.

Our instructors, Simon Adlard and Ged Terry were both fantastic. The manner in which the course was conducted was friendly, non-threatening and informative with loads of laughs. We were never pressurised by them. We called them Bloggs, they called us Sir, if we needed help it was Simon or Ged and there was always a safety net, so if they called "I have control" – they meant it!

The workload was high. There were many lectures to complete and as the weather was mixed, it didn't take long for the air work and the ground school to de-synchronise. This meant after a morning of lectures about winch failures, in the afternoon, we might go and fly demonstrations of approach control or aerotow.

Clive and I had joked that it was a 9-day exam but had re-assured ourselves that it was a training course. At times, I think the former was true but there is no better way to learn than from one's own mistakes!

There was no respite as the syllabus had to be completed so we started at 0900 hrs with one of us giving a met briefing, the weather never improved but the briefings did. We were usually finished by 1800 hrs and all ate together sometimes in the Club, sometimes in a local pub. We were back at our rented cottage by 2100 hrs.

We had made the decision at the start to use the evenings to unwind and wake early to get a couple of hours of study in before briefing. This worked out well.

We flew the Puchacz. Much has been said about this glider but I think it was a great machine. It did exactly what you told it to do, not always an advantage but great for training. I did a couple of sorties in the Duo Discus, which was a fabulous glider but not much good at demonstrating some of the exercises.

As the week progressed the pressure started to tell. It wasn't the external pressure that I had experienced at college and certainly not from Simon or Ged. It was far worse; it was the pressure from within.

The requirement was to fly and patter an exercise correctly. The patter has to fit exactly within the exercise and there must be no chance of confusing Bloggs by an incorrect word or instruction. Ged and Simon concentrated on misunderstanding everything they possibly could!

I found flying some of the exercises accurately quite exacting and timing the patter became a nightmare. As the workload increased the patter would get scrambled, concentrate on that and the handling suffered.

I found this very frustrating and got more and more angry with myself. Naturally, the angrier and more frustrated I became, the worse it got! By Friday morning, in the small hours, I concluded gliding was no longer for me.

Ged and Simon came to my rescue and changed the exercises and another valuable lesson was learnt. We moved on to fault-finding and how to correct the problem. With the change, the inner relief was considerable and the pressure gradually disappeared – if you stop banging your head against a brick wall, it no longer hurts. I repeated the previous exercises and all much better!

That evening Simon told us that we had all passed.

There were still some exercises to complete and we didn't finish until the last day. It was interesting that Simon had planned to do some more fault-finding with us but had decided that he was no longer sharp enough due to fatigue and decided to call it a day. There was a useful lesson to learn.

All that remained outstanding was to ensure that the paperwork was all completed and signed off. Finally we were debriefed individually before setting off home. There was ample time then to thank Clive for all his help and support during the week.

Am I sure I enjoyed it?

Yes, I learnt a tremendous amount both about gliding and about myself. The self - induced pressure wasn't much fun but it reminded me how destructive it is. I hope I have also picked up a thing or two about instructional technique from Ged and Simon.

I am very grateful to Roger. Without his patience and expertise I could not have contemplated doing the course.

There is only one fly in the ointment. The field has been closed by snow and the winch is too heavy to move on soft ground. The tug is grounded with no propeller and I still haven't done my Acceptance checks with Adrian.

I knew it wasn't going to be easy!

John Weddell

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? A PERSONAL VIEW.

All being well, the whole airfield should be usable in the spring. This will be an opportunity to review the way we do things and how we can we move the Club forward. That's all very well but it would be wise to decide which direction we wish to go before setting off.

I think there is a need to have a short, medium and long-term plan – sound familiar?

In the short term, it should be possible to have separate launch and landings areas. This would enable us to have an improved launch rate. The effect of cross winds on winch launching must be investigated again as it may be possible to adjust the launch direction. The Planning restrictions that inhibit aerotow operations are under review at present.

We must create more opportunities to fly cross-country. We have been trying to do this for a couple of years but circumstances, mainly meteorological, have conspired against us. And we need to try to ensure pupils keep making progress, early solo pilots continue to improve and those that want to go further get there (and back). In short, we must make sure that everybody has the opportunity to do the sort of flying they want to do.

In the medium term we need to build our membership. The key to the success of any club is a sound financial base. We can continue as we are now. Our membership numbers will sustain the present operation but purchasing new equipment or buildings will always be a struggle. With more members, the income would increase and would generate a surplus that will enable the purchases to be made.

Other areas could be explored, catering, 7 day a week operation, courses. You name it, let's try it. It's the initial hurdle to expand a little bit more which will be difficult.

In the long term, who knows, it rather depends on how the medium term develops.

We must be aware of the constraints:

- The Airfield. Winter operation must be sustainable so the drainage must be sorted out after the surface has consolidated. This may cost more than we think.
- Instructor numbers. As we all know, it sometimes takes a long time to work through the flying list. This is despite the enormous efforts of the instructor corps. We just do not have the number of instructors required to roster two on duty for each flying day. We are very grateful to Val, Bill and the Steves who travel a fair distance to assist us. Without them, we would be in dire straits. On the NPPL front; we would be unable to do this without David and Alan coming to our rescue. There is no quick solution to this but those at the start of their gliding career should consider becoming an instructor or how shall we manage the succession?

- Equipment. Gliders will need to be replaced at sometime. What the re-equipment programme will be is dependent on membership numbers and so it's back to the medium term!

The club would have great difficulty if the Tuesday Club decided to have a sabbatical year or even just a week! I will not list all the tasks that have been completed in the last year – there is insufficient space in this edition and the next! So when a request is made for assistance, please assist, it will be all our flying that will be affected otherwise.

I must emphasise to everybody that these ideas are just mine. We shall decide in Committee where we go from here, but I hope I am not the only one thinking about it – if so, we are in trouble!

Finally the future of the club is down to just one person – YOU.

John Weddell

ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION AIRSHOW – SHOREHAM

A summary for all the ESGC members who take an active interest in the Show.

The Show takes place on the third weekend of August each year. We have little choice over dates. The Show used to be in September, more appropriate for a Battle of Britain commemorative event, but Lancing College preferred us to hold it during the school holidays for safety reasons. The next stage is informal and involves the Chairmen of all Airshows within the UK “bidding” for slots in the short summer airshow calendar. The reason is simple: there is only one Red Arrows team, one BBMF, one Vulcan, one Swordfish, one Guy Westgate; the list is endless. All the Shows want all the best display items and it makes logistical and economic sense for the South Coast to hold all its displays within a few short weeks. We have agreed to share dates with Bournemouth in recent years. We are sufficiently far from Bournemouth not to steal each other's spectators, and the displays attract a different type of audience because Shoreham is an airfield site and Bournemouth has a sea-front show.

Shoreham's show has a number of strengths: it tries to mix the display items so that a noisy fast-jet item will be followed by a light aircraft formation team, or even the WW1 replicas. The Vulcan might be followed by Guy Westgate's unique aerial ballet and I learn that we will have the Frenchman Christian Moullec back in 2011. M. Moullec's display is remarkable in that he has geese and cranes flying in formation with his flexi-wing microlight. They even change formation on his voice demands bellowed in the French vernacular. Another strength is the people: there is a distinct carnival atmosphere throughout. Everyone, from gate security personnel to beautifully turned out ATC Cadets, both boys and girls, who run the car parks and sell programmes, has a smile and utter courtesy. Much of the atmosphere is due to the Show's 100 or more helpers being unpaid volunteers, all working together with a will and only one aim: to raise money for RAFA which, *inter alia*, is doing so much at present to ease the burden of our colleagues serving overseas, in particular in Afghanistan. We must be doing something right as this year the prestigious “Aeroplane” magazine named Shoreham's Airshow as the event of the month for August. Since many shows take place during that month, this is quite an accolade.

A further attraction at Shoreham is the large static park. In the past this has been filled with the nightstopping WW2 Warbirds and most of the other display aircraft, plus any number of serving military aircraft which the Army, the RAF and the Fleet Air Arm were able to release for a few days of publicity and passive recruiting. Sadly, in these times of defence cut-backs there are all too few military aircraft available in the UK for static display, however in spite of foreign demands we managed to arrange three Harriers this year: a display Harrier, now a very rare beast, its reserve aircraft, and a third Harrier on a liaison visit whose pilot was able to arrange a weekend pass to see his family who live near Brighton. You can see this Harrier in the background of Josh Hoole's excellent photograph. We have tried to fill the absent spaces in the static park with a varied selection of types reflecting Shoreham's reputation for variety, and the rarer the better. This year's types ranged from a Miles Messenger in Montgomery's D-Day Invasion Markings to a

Pitts Special, a Streak Shadow and our own Fournier G-AYJD ably flown in and out despite the awful weather by Ian Bull. I was keen to encourage more variety still and this year we welcomed a number of military vehicles of WW2 vintage plus some Bofors guns and other anti-aircraft weapons. These proved very popular and more are promised for next year. A further initiative was to invite as many vintage gliders as we could lay our hands on and it was particularly pleasing to see two of Ringmer's finest on display: Pete Wilkins's bright red K6 and the 'Banana'. Parham was able to supply a vintage motorcycle, plus Andrew Jarvis's entire stable of Weiss 1909 replica, immaculate Olympia 2b and his equally immaculate, shared T21 Sedbergh, in silver 1950s RAF colours. The T21 flew in and out of Shoreham, proceeding so slowly on finals against a 15 kt headwind that three aircraft, including me in the Chipmunk, overtook it to land first.

We try and arrange the static park in areas and for this reason we put all the gliders plus Ian's Fournier next to each other and right next to the crowd barrier. We deliberately placed the gliders not only next to the barrier but at a corner pinch-point where the spectators were bound to see them at close hand. You learn by experience and we found that the crowd was unexpectedly fascinated in watching the gliders being rigged and de-rigged. Because of poor weather the gliders were stowed in their trailers overnight whilst the T21 was towed into the hangar for protection. Thus there was ample opportunity for the crowd to watch what, for most, was their first experience of rigging; atask we probably regard as a bind. Andrew Jarvis described it as "Street Theatre", a seemingly apt description. It will certainly be repeated.

After all the excitement and anticipation of the display aircraft arrivals on the eve of the Show, the actual event was ruined by the weather and marred by a tragic accident. Very few display items flew due to low cloud, persistent rain at times and poor visibility, all of which also prevented many of our visitors arriving at all. Bournemouth suffered an even worse fate and whilst we soldiered on to the bitter end on Sunday with some ground displays including the Battle of Britain pyrotechnics and sound effects, Bournemouth scrubbed everything at about 3pm which led to a massive traffic jam as people tried to leave the favoured beach-front areas.

Shoreham is all about charity and the entire proceeds go to RAFA. In 2009 we had a good year - £180,000 was given to RAFA. This year was a weather disaster, but we still handed more than £120,000 to RAFA. To raise such a figure during adversity speaks volumes for all the working volunteers involved and so many of them are ESGC members.

I have one abiding memory of 2010's Show that will live with me: the Swift glider crashes right in front of the crowd and is totally wrecked. My own worst fear is that the pilot is mortally wounded, perhaps with a broken neck. Surely no-one can survive such an event and we all watch in abject horror for a few seconds whilst coming to terms with what has so vividly occurred right in front of our eyes. Then after a few more seconds the pilot drags himself over the side of what remains of his cockpit and rests on the runway awaiting assistance. My abiding memory is not only that wonderful sight of the pilot, alive after all, but the spontaneous and huge round of applause from Shoreham's ever-faithful crowd. It was a moment to savour for ever.

Terence Henderson



OLYMPIAS TO OLYMPIA

The Gliding Movement has long been trying to have its sport added to the long list of Olympic Classes. Success was finally achieved in the late 1930s and Gliding was named as an official Olympic Sport for the 1940 Helsinki Games. But the celebration was short-lived. The onset of war in Europe caused the Games to be cancelled. The next Olympics was held in London in 1948 during a period of extreme national austerity and also after the coldest, longest winter on record. (I remember the 1948 Games – my late father was one of the officials and with the shortage of hotels in the south-east everyone involved in running the Games had Olympic competitors staying with them at their homes. Our house guest was Arthur Wint, a sprinter from Trinidad, who was the most delightful, courteous man – I saw him as a very gentle giant and he won a gold medal to boot! I was young enough then to assume every child had a gold medal winner staying with them. We even bought a 9 inch screen Pye television to watch the Games and I can see now my father's cronies crowding around the tiny screen to watch all the Olympic action – happy days!)

The Vintage Gliding Club (VGC), now international and with 1500 members was started by Chris Wills, one of the sons of Philip Wills, a former world-champion Glider pilot and author. The VGC is hoping to stage an informal Olympic event during 2012. The original 1940 event was to be a one-design competition and the chosen aircraft was the DFS Meise, many of which were built in Germany, but after WW2 ended, more were built in a number of countries including Britain, where it was known as the Olympia, and France where it was named the Nord 2000. Smaller numbers were also made in Denmark. The Oly became the basis for the "Standard Class" sailplane with its 15 metre wingspan and competed in a number of world championships. Few German Meises still exist because they were held together with Casein type glues whereas Elliotts of Newbury's UK built Olympias used Aerolite 306

The VGC has now decided to extend their "Olympic" invitation to all K6 variant owners as well as the Meise/Nord 2000/Oly group and asks all who are enthusiastic to declare their firm interest in staging a 2012 event, to be held "Somewhere in Southern England" during the Summer of 2012. A notice giving contact details has been posted in the clubhouse. Please lend your support.

Terence Henderson



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SILVER DISTANCE ATTEMPT AND CONCLUSION

21st June 1989 (ASK8), 22nd April 1991 (Oly 401), 22nd May 1991 (Oly 401) completed.



Arrived at the club 7.30am a sunny Tuesday morning in June, a course week. Conditions were good with predictions of a north, north-easterly airflow.

The hangar was open and things were already on the move in readiness for the day's flying.

Having spent the previous evening plotting two 50 k courses and smoking my barograph I was now prepared for the days task, water in my hip flask, (a very useful Christmas gift) and my two apples!!

All set for the off now, the club K8 was at my disposal and after the DI a good walk around and then to the launch point, at last I was ready for my first Silver C cross country attempt.

The tug arrived at about 9.30am. I was hoping for the first launch, but a delay occurred in finding an official observer to sign my declaration.

Already small cumulus clouds were forming beneath the Downs and over Lewes which indicated to me that the conditions were going to be favourable.

Finally ready to launch and everything checked in my usual way. I took the tow to 3,000 feet, released and took my clubhouse photograph and then started the search,

I had lost 1,000 feet before picking up my first thermal over Ringmer (2-2kts). I have to admit that having to leave the field for the first time was somewhat frightening and, as I was now drifting well over the A27 and Lewes, the field was becoming smaller and smaller and I was not gaining too much height. I spent an hour just sitting round over Lewes not wanting to drift although it was almost the way that I wanted to go.

A Cessna 152 past well below me and in a turn I noticed that Arthur Dearden who took off 30 minutes prior to myself had landed out in his Pilatus in a field in the Hamsey area. It cannot be that good today I thought to myself but how come I am still up here! I was starting to get some very good lift now and feeling a little bit more confident realising that I was now more or less well into my task and back to 3,000 feet, checking land marks on my map and watching Arthur's retrieve as I circled.

Following the A275 to Cooksbridge level crossing I made a left turn to follow the South Downs picking up the thermals off the warm slopes, I have passed Ditchling Beacon now and approaching Devils Dyke where there were Hand Gliders working the slopes on the Northern side. And now the dreaded gap across the Adur Valley. A definite no lift area I was told, but they were wrong today! .

The wind seemed to have picked up a little by now and I had to watch the drift as I wanted to stay on the slopes which were producing hill lift and thermals. I could now just about see the sand pits at Washington and the big A24 roundabout, and a cautious confidence was now showing itself. I aimed the K8 for the sand pits, checked the map and found that I was now in the 4,500 ft TMA. A very rough strong thermal took me to the base and in that turn I noticed a K13 (I think from Parham) in the same lift, a wave greeted me and we passed on.

Over the sand pits now and I am looking for the trailers at Parham and their they were! Almost at my target now. I worked out the course change needed to take me to Duncton Ponds, kept it in my mind and ate my apple.

I looked hard for the ponds but they were very difficult to see and also muddy by appearance. I made a turn in the K8 around the west edge to take my task photographs (I got a bit carried away with my camera during the trip!). I have done it I thought to myself and there is a good chance I might get back to Ringmer as well.

I could now see well along the South Downs to the East the sun behind me as I make my way home, thermals were now taking me to 5,000 feet here and it crossed my mind that it would now be possible to claim my 5 hours duration now being 4 hours into the flight, I took a glide to the sand pits and picked my route towards Stenning. Arriving there I was now looking in the direction of the prominent Lewes chalk-pits and home.

Passing high over the Adur Valley I did not realise the significance of the severe turbulence which I was now experiencing and then it registered to me; the rough edge of a sea breeze front! I now needed a very good climb to get me home and I have found one!

I was now feeling extremely confident and it was now necessary to fly the K8 at my very best to avoid an out landing although in my mind preparing for one. Lewes in sight now but I still need to stay up for 40 minutes. My last thermal was west of Lewes to about 3,000 feet. I could now see the airfield and flew the K8 towards it. Just a long glide now I thought to myself, the cool sea air was now very smooth and somewhat misty. I have passed through the front now arriving west of Ringmer at approximately 900 feet, still needing 15 minutes for my five hour flight.. I now am looking for lift over Chandler's brick yard but found nothing at all! So straight down wind for a landing.

Consequently I missed my five hours by 14 minutes and did not get my distance due to taking my photographs in the wrong quadrant and also missed my height! But I did achieve 104 k out and return in the club K8 on my first attempt; plus a bonus of the Club Cup for the best flight in a part wood glider in that season.

Henry Weston

PS – I did complete my Silver height and distance in my own Olympia 401. The same task to Duncton Ponds on the 22nd April 1991 off a Winch launch but landed out on the return in the Adur Valley ha! ha! I finally completed my Silver Badge duration at Talgarth also in the Oly 401 on the 22nd May 1991 thanks to the coaching of Fred Bishop. *Photo courtesy of my wife Sue.*



THE HENDERSON PROJECT

Olympia 2b G-APXC is nearing the end of its rebuild and is due to leave Ringmer in January for covering and doping. I have no experience of covering real aeroplanes and don't trust myself with a spray gun either so Oly is off to Turweston inside Ringmer's resident green trailer. The trailer has been keeping Ringmer's gorgeous "Yellow Banana" nice and dry for the last few years and I am grateful to Simon Khan, Roger Warren and Geoff Tilley for finding a replacement trailer in time knowing that it has not been a simple task for them. The trailer was originally pale blue and housed the Oly when bought from its previous owners in early 1997, a syndicate of members at the Derby and Lancashire Gliding Club based at the historic and beautiful Peak District site at Camphill, (venue of the World Championships one very wet summer in the fifties hence the unfortunate nickname "Damphill"). As soon as the glider and trailer were delivered to Sussex the Oly was unloaded and placed in a barn on our farm near Horsted Keynes. The trailer, which was needed for the recently completed Edgley EA-9 Optimist prototype, was then taken empty to Bideford in Devon, home of the now defunct Edgley Sailplanes Company of which I was chairman.

At Bideford the trailer had its roof raised at the aft end to make room for the EA-9's fin which is taller than the Oly's and was then painted in a bright shade of green (which it still enjoys) to match the Optimist sailplane. The Optimist prototype "HPJ", painted before I came on the scene, was the worst possible colour for a glider when viewed from above and I remember Derek Piggott landing out HPJ during the Club Class Nationals in 1997 and no one could find him in a tiny field from the air. In spite of landing out, Derek duly won the Nats with HPJ and being part of his team at the time gave me one of my most thrilling aviation experiences in over 50 years as a pilot.

Why choose Turweston for the covering and doping? Turweston is close to the Silverstone Motor Racing circuit and whilst it is the home of the Light Aircraft Association (formerly the PFA), it is also the home of Mick Allen who did a marvellous job on our Chipmunk such that ten years on it still wins concours and many admirers. The present plan, and always subject to change since my wife, Heather, wants the final say in any colour scheme, is to finish the Oly in clear fabric tinted with banana oil which will give the fabric a sepia-like tone, reminiscent of older aircraft and through which the complex wooden structure with its many thousands of components can be clearly seen. I wonder how long a "Daily" PDI will take if one can actually see most of the parts from the outside? However the plywood-covered sections, primarily the wing and tail D-boxes will be fabric-covered and then colour-doped, probably grey-silver, to hide the mixture of different plywoods and their many cross-grains all deliberately placed to give the wing and tail structural as well as torsional strength in an effort to prevent flutter at high speeds. The fuselage, fin and rudder will also be covered in the same lightweight French-made Diatex fabric but coloured in a light Cambridge blue with a cheat line along the length of the fuselage to give the illusion of a more streamlined shape.

The Oly should emerge from its green trailer back at Ringmer sometime in April like a moth emerging from its chrysalis looking a little bit like a Cambridge University Air Squadron aeroplane of the 1950s, but without the RAF roundels and trainer-yellow chord-wise colour bands. I always favoured this scheme from my schooldays because I initially trained on T31 Tandem Tutors and T21 Sedberghs, all in silver RAF livery, with the school's Combined Cadet Force at RAF Halton in 1959, and a year later, after winning an RAF Flying Scholarship, I gained a PPL. No schoolboy in the late 1950's was ever going to afford any recency flying, I couldn't even afford lunch at school every day, but the Instructors at the Cambridge University Air Squadron, themselves serving RAF Officers, offered me a chance to fly with them in the Squadron's Chipmunks based at nearby Marshall's airfield. The Chipmunks were also in the same 1950's silver and yellow colour scheme as the T21 and T31 gliders, but with a Cambridge Blue stripe cheat line along the sides of the fuselage and University badges on the Gipsy Major engine cowlings. At 17 years old, this was the closest I was going to get to Heaven for the foreseeable future, hence my liking for the colour scheme.

I still pay nostalgic visits to both Halton and Marshall's Cambridge every year: RAF Halton is the base for the de Havilland Moth Club's Charity Flying days in June, and Cambridge is the site for the final selection day of the de Havilland Educational Trust's Flying and Engineering Bursaries (*refer to Page 4*). Our short-listed candidates for the flying bursary meet at Marshall's airfield for a flying assessment in one of the Cambridge Flying Group's Tiger Moths followed by a grilling interview conducted by Ms Miranda McKay and myself. These bursaries are there for the taking and there are NO age limits – we had a 75 year-old man apply last year!

The rebuild has not been without its moments, some humorous, some less so. When the fuselage was being moved into the workshop Graham Northcott holding the inverted sharp end, ably assisted by John Johnson at the tail, was stung six times by wasps emerging from a nest inside the towhook recess. Graham manfully hung on despite the stings and managed not to drop the precious cargo. He told me the stings only hurt for five days so I suppose we were lucky. JJ was double-quick to the rescue, not with TCP for Graham but to exterminate the wasps with chemical foam. Safety is all about getting one's priorities right. A nest about the size of a grapefruit was later found and removed from under the rudder pedals. Another day we were moving one of the wings into the workshop and whilst manhandling the structure over all sorts of hangar detritus,



The uses of clothes pegs are legion!

Mike Collins saw a mouse run out right next to him from within the leading edge D-box. Like Graham before him, Mike was quite unperturbed by the event but we are now going to study all the hidden areas in the structure with a boroscope in case Mickey Mouse's family are still in hiding somewhere.

A number of members have willingly helped with glueing, fettling and paint stripping whilst others have merely stood back and watched with expressions which vary from disbelief to sympathy. Jack Grayer's omnipresence monitoring and advising throughout has been absolutely vital, and there have been tasks too difficult for us

mere amateurs, bringing Jack's woodworking skills to the forefront. Graham Bartle and Ian Richardson have been towers of strength turning out virtually every Sunday and it's a lot of fun: whilst we work, the Gliding Club's affairs (as well as the rest of the world) are put to rights during discussions with a lot of tooth sucking, whilst meal times, which are both set in stone and sacred, have their own underground culture when the other Hangar Residents emerge as if by magic from wherever they have been hiding to join us for tea, cakes and "war stories". I understand much the same occurs at Ringmer on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. If the weather and field are suitable for flying we might even emerge for just a few minutes from the soundproof, windowless but warm, bunker of a workshop to marvel at someone staying up in a local thermal. If it's a winch-launched K8 then we know Jack Shirvel is about. Estimates of how much longer he will remain airborne are banded around.

Once Oly returns to Ringmer from Turweston there is still much to be done. Many photographs have been taken to remind us of just where everything fits. A few months ago we had the luxury of Andrew Jarvis's beautiful Oly, which was stored in the Old Hangar after its return from rebuild in Poland, as a QRH (quick reference handbook to those who haven't spent years on Boeings) to solve any queries but now that has gone home to Parham we will have to rush off to Kittyhawk instead where Jack G's two Oly's are stored.



and G-cramps!!

Terence Henderson



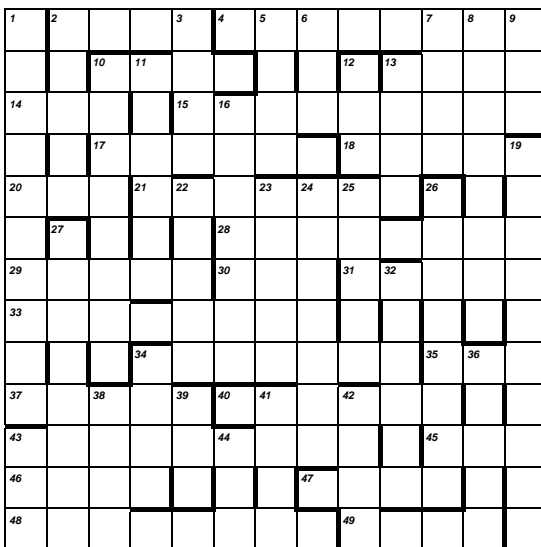
CROSSWORD

Faulty Towers

Nine answers are of a kind and so are clued by subsidiary indication only. They are all locations at which there is a tower or pair of towers. However, before entry into the grid one letter of each answer must be altered to allow interlocking answers to fit; hence *faulty towers*. The nine displaced letters can be arranged into a phrase describing a service that the towers provide, or will soon do so. The phrase should be highlighted in the completed grid. Note that one light does double duty.

When you have identified the nine locations, you will see that one of them serves a different audience from the others. This location has a pair of towers. What is the height of the taller of the two above ground level? You should all know where to find that information !! Write the answer below the grid.

As usual, a 2,500 ft aero-tow will be awarded to the solver of the first correct solution to be drawn from the hat. Please post your entry, with your name, in the A-B pigeon hole in the clubhouse. Solution and winner's name will be published in The Grapevine in due course.



Graham Bartle

PS The Ofcom web site may help to confirm some of the names.

Across

- 2 In a frenzy but I'm alright (4)
- 4 Soarable feature on-line in the IOW (8)
- 10 Prince Charles for example arranged hire (4)
- 13 Former coin – true! (4)
- 14 Roadside helper roundabout associate (3, abbr.)
- 15, 49 Albino bird of prey on high ground (9, 4)
- 17 Summer pasture huts in Perth, covers less 500 (6)
- 18 0.1; tin anniversary (5)
- 20 Hard morning for radio amateur (3)
- 21 Miss Duncan is adorable in part (7)
- 28 Erasure of the French time by charged particle (8)
- 29 Information that is found when lamp is rubbed (5)
- 30 Due back it's said to tie the knot (3)
- 31 Reject with contempt the odds on a vessel (5)
- 33 Intellectuals like Humpty Dumpty (8)
- 34, 32D Former glasshouse (very large) (7, 6)
- 35 The vessel part of 31 (3)
- 37 Peaceful bird – right! (5)
- 40 Emperor's salad? (6)
- 43 Half an em on bottle top: fenced off area (9)
- 45 Agent, odds unknown (3)
- 46 Lionel who added a musical twist to Twist (4)
- 47 Undo change in altered test (4)
- 48, 49 Rare cry of stag during the rut on incline (8, 4)

Down

- 1 Former PM speciality (10)
- 2 Capital of Ghana, current alternating about artist (5)
- 3 Sporty antipodean who can't fly (4)
- 5 Gemstone for old mate (4)
- 6 Whiskey has sex appeal and humour (3)
- 7 College fellow, desperate man around the orient (4)
- 8 Yields may blossom from eyelid and spike (8)
- 9 Moose-like deer takes two from marine mollusc (3)
- 10 Owns Paddy's belongings (8)
- 11 That is up around facial feature; sea urchins (6)
- 12 Check credentials of physician (3)
- 13 Daughter of Uranus and Ge upset hear (4)
- 16 Principal means progress against the current (7)
- 19 Suspended weight, first gram becomes neutral (10)
- 22 Guide a young ox (5)
- 23 Actions property ownership documents (5)
- 24 Midshipman getting on about good man (7)
- 25 Pauses putting lock of hair in disarray (5)
- 26 Centre of Old English wood (8)
- 27 Royal embracing one working on the provinces (8)
- 32 *See 34 Across*
- 34 Ancient Gaul on about a young sow (4)
- 36 To repulse a turned-up outcast (5)
- 38 Remedy designed for unbleached linen (4)
- 39 Caviar for example from ground mineral (3)
- 41 Subtle emanation from gold artist (4)
- 42 Fourth man set hard and lived to 912 (4)
- 43 Swap letters in busy worker to get receding tide (3)
- 44 Sir Henry Rider Haggard's lady? (3)