

November 2023

LASHAM

Rising Air Magazine



A land-out story

The new clubhouse

Winter talks

Mike Evans



Changes
I have found in my life that very few things stay the same over long periods, and at Lasham we are certainly no exception to this.

I would say in my time as CFI I have seen many changes in the way we operate and generally I would say that most of the changes have been for the better (Please do not think I include airspace in this statement).

Some of the major changes that I have seen in the last few months have been within the operational staff. We have a

few new faces joining the team, but unfortunately, we are also losing our longest serving flying staff member, Jordan Bridge.

The old saying goes "you don't know what you've got until its gone" and this will certainly apply. For the last couple months, I have been in denial about Jordan leaving, and I suspect that it will be another few months before I fully realise how much I miss my trusted work colleague.

Our loss is the Civil Aviation Authority's gain and I know that Jordan will prosper in that organisation. Fortunately for gliding, and more importantly Lasham, we haven't lost him. I know that once his feet are firmly under the table at the



CAA, he will reappear at Lasham as a volunteer instructor and examiner.

Winter flying

Another of the things that changes at Lasham is the weather. Warm days are a rarity. Winter flying clothing is the norm and there are the usual issues with flying in winter.

Misting Canopies

Very often the flying has to be curtailed due to misting canopies that just cannot be kept clear. This results in us having to tow the gliders back to the hangar while there is plenty of daylight left. It can be very frustrating. There is a temptation to try and clear the canopy with cloths, rags, or anything else that's available. This is probably best avoided. It will be a losing battle and you run the risk of scratching the very expensive canopy.



Rain

Living on an island at the edge of the North Atlantic means that the winter tends to give us plenty of wet and damp weather. Glider pilots are a persistent bunch, and we do try to use any flying opportunities that might present themselves.

This sometimes means that we are out on the airfield and operating between the showers. Obviously flying in the rain is best avoided, but this is not the only issue when its raining. On several occasions this year we have had to remove rain water from the gliders ASI static system.



The gliders have been parked while a shower goes through and the rain has been driven into the fuselage static ports. When the glider is then flown the ASI's tend to either under read, or not function at all. If you are parking up because its about to rain, then try putting a tyre in front of the into wind static port on the fuselage.

Parking club gliders

It's actually very simple to park the club-owned gliders. As long as you stick to the following advice everything on the airfield will be fine.

1. All LGS club-gliders should be parked with the into-wind wing down.
2. Put one tyre on this wing, if its light wind; two tyres, if is a fresh wind; and three to four tyres, if it's very gusty.
3. If you have to contemplate more than four tyres on the wing, then its time to stop flying.

The commonly-held belief that you should park glass gliders with the into-wind wing up is probably best left with the private owner gliders, as it is their choice as to how they leave their expensive equipment. Club gliders that have been positioned with the into-wind wing up and a tyre on the down wind wing are not parked, they have actually been abandoned!!

Things you can do to stop gliders ending up in the workshop

I have now been working part-time for the summer months in Lasham's workshop. I can say that i have a reasonable understanding of the number of repetitive damage issues that we have had to sort out on the club's fleet.

The most serious of these during the summer have been the three K21 rear canopies that have been allowed to blow open in strong winds, with the result that the frame assembly either gets bent, or has completely failed.

Unfortunately, the repair on the frame often takes a couple of weeks, as the canopy tubes have to be cut, jigged in the correct position and then taken to the local CAA welder, who will then carry out the repairs to the new joints.

The cost of this repair is not only the engineer's time and any materials, but also the lost revenue of the glider for several days.

The second most common reasons for the unserviceability are punctures to the main wheels on the K13s and the K21s. These have generally been caused by the sharp stones and flints from the cross-runways on the south side of the airfield. Again, the cost of this repair is considerable. A new tyre and tube retail for around £150, and it normally takes three hours of the engineer's time to change the tyre. The total cost to Lasham including lost revenue for half a day is probably around £500.



Sharp stones from cross-runway cause punctures

My advice is that you should try to avoid landing on the disused cross runways. Either select a reference point well before them, or if that not an option, then plan to reduce the airbrake and touch down just beyond them. Would instructors please take over, if necessary, to achieve this.

Summer 2024 activities

I normally start planning the following summer's activities in late October and November. With a bit of luck the calendar goes live in early December on Lasham's website. There is often some late shuffling around of the course dates because we have to staff them. Sometimes there is demand for extra courses.

Five-day training courses

The Monday – Friday training course will start on Tuesday, 2 April, and will operate every week throughout the summer, apart from the competition weeks. These courses are an excellent way of making rapid progress in your training. Club members can fly on these courses by just paying the instructor's booking fee and paying for your flying on top of this.

Advanced courses

These courses prove popular every year. They are a great way of making that jump towards becoming a licensed pilot, and then becoming a competent cross-country pilot. We will be running advanced courses from late April until the end of August.

Solo to Bronze: Three courses spread throughout the year.

Bronze to Silver: Three courses. One in early May, another in early June and the last one in late August.

Silver and beyond: Sometime in late July.

Competitions

Following on from the success of the 2023 Lasham Regionals, we will again be running this competition in 2024. The exact date has yet to be confirmed, but it will be sometime around the beginning of August. Once we have fixed the dates, all members will get an email at the same time as we go live on the BGA's competition calendar.

The 18-Metre and 20-Metre Two-Seater Nationals will be from 25 of May to 2 June 2024. Entry for this competition should be made through the BGA's website.

Expeditions in 2024.

By this time of year, I would normally have a fairly firm idea of what the plans are for the 2024 Lasham expeditions. Unfortunately, due to a number of factors, the early season expedition is not yet confirmed, so to give you a rough idea of our plans, here's what we know so far.

In the spring we should be going to a ridge/wave site somewhere in the UK for a two-week period in March. Where and exactly when have yet to be decided.

The Duo Discus will be based at Sisteron in the French Alps over a four-week period in May and June. G Dale will be running the mountain soaring training courses which will operate from Monday to Friday. I know that these will be oversubscribed, so to avoid 50 people sitting outside the office at 6am waiting for the list to open, we intend to hold a ballot in early January.

There will probably be an expedition to Aboyne in October. However, all we have done so far is book glider slots with the Deeside Gliding Club. There is still a lot to think about following this year's expedition, and we need to get our heads around all of the factors before making any firm commitments. I would anticipate that an expedition email will go out to the members in early December informing people of what's happening and more importantly how to book.

Colin Watt.

CFI Lasham Gliding Society

Front cover: There will be new 'floating plane' canopy on the new clubhouse that reflects the 'language' of a glider's wing spans beyond the width of the building to the south, providing a sheltered and shaded outdoors terrace area.

Mid-October as I write this so getting into late Autumn which means not much flying of vintage gliders but increasing use of the GHC workshop. So what's been happening over quite a disappointing summer?

11th GHC AGM

This went ahead on Sunday 3 September in the GHC workshop. A straightforward AGM with no contentious issues. Chairman, Tony Newbery, raised a key topic, namely that the Gliding Heritage Centre could do with more help in managing its affairs. These range from the "practical" of keeping the hangars, workshop, and gliders clean and tidy, to the many behind-the-scenes "admin" tasks required to keep the GHC functioning efficiently. An e-mail went out to the GHC membership on the 12th October detailing what help was ideally needed and why.

EVENTS



Oly 2 "Brimstone" landing. Rhonsperber in the foreground (Courtesy of Ellen Stikkelbroek)

The "highlight" was the **50th Vintage Glider Club rally** at Aston Down from Saturday July 29 to Sunday 6 August. This was the big event for the year for vintage gliding internationally and was preceded by the Rendezvous meeting at nearby Nympsfield, 22 – 28 July.

The GHC took three gliders to Aston Down, the Sir John Allison Prefect, the Steinadler, and "Gertie": the Sky. They all flew, but it has to be said "Lady Weather" wasn't that happy during the week and the flying done was somewhat limited.

However, Aston Down is a really lovely site, and even if flying was well down on what the participants would have wished for, it was good to be there with so many vintage enthusiasts from the UK and across Europe. Pesky "Covid" struck at Aston Down, but I'm glad to say I haven't heard of anyone becoming seriously ill as a consequence.

GLIDERS

1942 Schweizer TG3a

Following the update in the July edition of Rising Air Gary I had expected to be saying our "warbird" has now completed its BGA mandated testing programme and has been issued with a CofA.

That's not the case I'm afraid, but we are now getting very close. The problem has been long spells of unsuitable weather combined with the availability of Richard Moyse who's undertaken to do the required test flights. Now at (hopefully!) the final hurdle of doing "2 up" flights. The first of these took place on the 10 October with Richard and Mick Wells as P2. The second where the spinning was checked out was on the 24 October with Andy Aveling as P2.

This is all being documented by Richard Moyse and sent to the BGA technical committee. Fingers crossed they'll agree that the testing programme has been satisfactorily completed and will agree to issue a full CofA



10 October,
first "two up"
flight of TG3a

(Courtesy of
Gary Pullen)

There's no change from what I wrote in the July edition of Rising Air re the Swiss Spalinger. We're waiting to start the BGA-mandated test programme, but we can't until that of the TG3 is completed as neither glider type has ever flown in the UK before, and the BGA technical committee is only prepared to look at one new "old" type (if you see what I mean!) at a time.

THE WORKSHOP

The workshop has been fairly well utilised over the summer. Usage will undoubtedly grow significantly as we move into winter. Besides continuing the long-term restorations we'll be having a lot of gliders, both GHC owned and private, coming in for their (ARCs)/CofAs. You can expect a good attendance on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, and more than likely as winter progresses on the other days as well. Only Mondays are "iffy".

1944 Spalinger S21h



GHC's has two long term occupants. One is the Phoebus 17c, formerly Surrey and Hants "265". Geoff Clark continues with the restoration.



The other is the Eon Eton (*picture left*), our Elliotts of Newbury Primary, built in 1951 and donated to us by the RAF Museum in January 2017. A full restoration is now underway led by Steve Pullen with the ultimate intention of getting her airworthy again – last flown 1962! Ambitious? we shall see! The work involves a full recover plus replacing all of the cables. Currently Steve is involved in some pretty tricky work replacing some of the ribs in the port wing that involve a difficult splice.

VISITS



(Engineering students being shown the ropes by Gary Pullen)

Tailing off now as we move into winter, especially group visits. However, Sunday 15 October saw an enormous turn out for our 14:00 Sunday "Just turn up tour". The visits of the engineering students has been a big success again, 490 of them over three two-day visits which also included being shown round 2 Excel Engineering.

WEBSITE

We are continuing to see good access and good reviews. We've still got a way to go to get it to where we really want it to be. Thus there's a number of components of the old website which so far haven't been moved across.

The number one on the list is the MEDIA content – articles, films, etc. A project for myself and Paul Jackman over the winter.

SECOND HANGAR EXTENSION

This is our next major project, our fourth, but continues on hold. Whilst the GHC's funding position is excellent, it's still not good enough to safely cover the anticipated cost.

The situation was reviewed by the GHC CoM in their September meeting. Likely now that preparatory work won't kick-off until Spring 2024.

FLYING WEEK 2024

This will be Saturday 18 May to Friday 24 May which won't clash with the Nationals. Note the VGC National rally is being held at Usk 25 – 31 May.

FLYABLE GHC GLIDERS IN 2024

We have a flexible arrangement with both the LGS and our insurers as to which of the GHC gliders can be flown. On any one day it's currently four single seaters and one two-seater.

However, on a subsequent flying day a different set of gliders can be flown. For the Flying Week we usually increase the numbers.

Not finalised, but for 2024 it's looking like the available gliders will be: Bocian, Bergfalke, prototype Prefect, Oly 2, Zugvogel 3b, and Foka 4. Hopefully being joined by the TG3a, Phoebus, Spalinger S21 (though maybe just with a Permit to Fly rather than a full CofA), possibly the Pirat, and who knows maybe even the EoN Eton Primary!

Glyn Bradney

Belated congratulations are due to: Pete Harvey & Chris Dawes (Silver Medal) and Steve Jones & Garry Coppin (Bronze Medal) in the Two-Seat Class at the European Gliding Championships at Lezno in August.

Toby Freeland won Silver at the European Juniors also in August in Denmark (only one point of a Gold Medal)



Reception

Arrival is improved by providing a new main entrance to the north and a new footpath from the car-park.

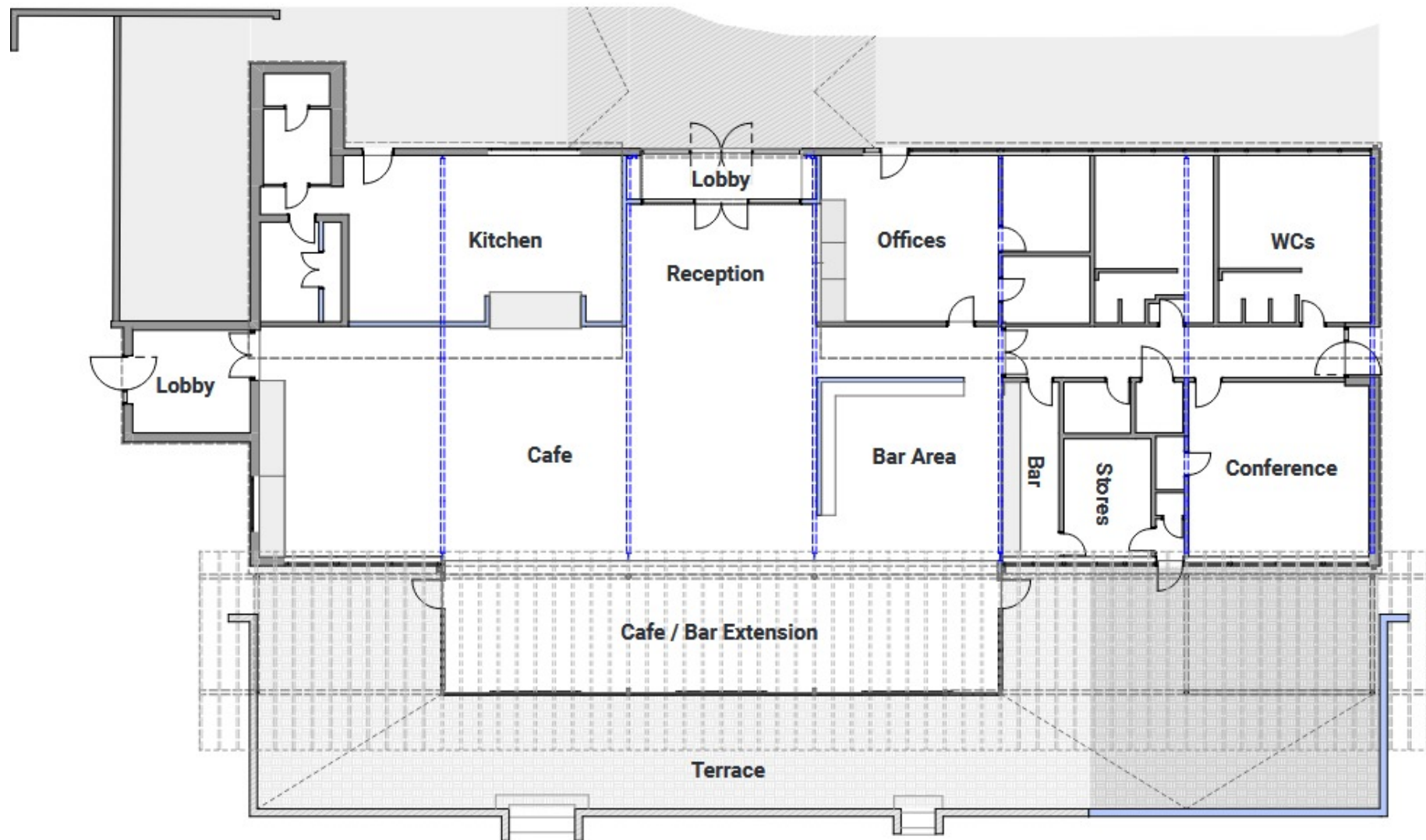


The restaurant extension with main section beyond

A cafe & bar extension inhabits the 'floating plane' structure, providing additional floor area and improving aspect to the airfield and connection with the external terrace.



The extension with the bar beyond



Interior layout



In previous years, I have listed the top twenty flights from Lasham with the highest total score on the National Ladder for 2023. Last year I could only carry forward three flights that were in my interim table in the July issue. This year all the best flights as at 30 June 2023, were still the best twenty flights as at 31 October.

This year the total distance flown from Lasham was 218,802 km versus 411,308 km last year. Though last year was exceptional, having 37% more kilometres than the previous highest annual distance logged.

I do not have the statistics for the whole year yet, but if you look at the launch statistics to 30 September, it shows a reduction in private flying and a 12% reduction in all aerotows. Private aerotows alone dropped by 24% versus last year.

Launches	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
LGS	14,997	13,388	6,207	9,065	13,295	13,888
Private	5,168	4,739	3,375	4,660	5,529	4,550
Total YTD	20,165	18,127	9,582	13,725	18,824	18,438

	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Aerotows	7,524	6,715	4,102	6,086	6,700	5,899
Winches	12,641	11,412	5,480	7,639	12,124	12,539
Total YTD	20,165	18,127	9,582	13,725	18,824	18,438

The tables also shows that the weather was not bad enough to reduce club flying.

The other strange fact is that the year 21/22 (yes 21/22) was the fourth worst year for total launches since my monthly records started in 2005 (excluding two COVID years). Only this year, 2011/12 and 2018/19 were worse.

BGA News

Electronic Conspicuity rebate scheme

The Department for Transport funded EC Rebate Scheme is nearing its end, with the application window closing on 31 March 2024. The scheme aims to improve airspace safety by encouraging the adoption of EC devices that enhance situational awareness for pilots. Eligible applicants still have an opportunity to claim a 50% rebate on the purchase cost of an EC device, up to a maximum of £250.

Editorial comment: There is a dilemma about fitting a transponder, even though anything that prevents collision must be a good thing. If you have one fitted, you are required to switch it on, provided you have enough power. However, the CAA seems to be getting tough on a minor accidental clipping of controlled airspace, even when it was immediately reported by radio by the pilot. (Apparently it is like a speed awareness course except with a mandatory exam. Failure results in loss of licence) A simple warning letter for a first offence might strike a better balance, encouraging pilots to switch on electronic devices to prevent collisions, without risking draconian enforcement. Anything else would be counter-productive.

Material for the magazine

I live in hope that our huge membership will produce interesting articles for each issue. "How I did it" can be interesting, especially at other locations or unusual weather. Moreover, there is a vast amount of technical expertise who could write some good stuff. I also like good photos, but I mean really good photos, plus mugshots.

I would also like to revive idea of a list of achievements. It should be at least show who has gone solo since the last issue. (Note: I don't want an ever-lengthening list for the year to date) Many other achievements don't have to go through the CFI's office, but if there is a comprehensive list of other major events, I could publish those as well. The listing of solos would need someone to go to the office every so often and collect the latest names. Volunteers?



Mike Evans died of a heart attack while gliding in Spain. He was born in Barmouth, Wales in 1948. His father was a master pilot and instructor in the Royal Air Force which meant as a family they were never in one place for long.

As a child Mike did not have an easy life after developing an illness at the age of eight from which he nearly died and which restricted his growth. From then on nothing was easy for Mike, but he was full of determination and was never one to let his problems hold him back.

Around the age of 20 he decided that exercise and a good diet was the way forward to keep medication to a minimum. He applied this strategy to his diabetes and recovery from a triple heart by-pass. After the operation he regularly attended at cardiac rehabilitation classes in order to maintain his fitness and to keep his gliding medical. This sheer grit and determination, for which we all came to know him, carried him through the rest of his life.

In his early years Mike played a big part in the Scout movement and his working career started in their Accounts Department at Gilwell Park. This introduced him to Lasham and in 1968 he took a gliding course. He went solo in May 1972.

As a result of his interest in the Scouts and gliding, he subsequently got a job with the National Scout Air Activity Centre based at Lasham looking after and feeding the scout troops who came to fly.

In these early days the accommodation was an Avro York C1 aircraft donated by Dan Air, which was later replaced by De Havilland Comet. However, Mike, by all accounts, had the luxury of a caravan. Being on site provided the opportunity to join the catering staff at the Gliding

Club eventually taking over as catering manager until 2005. After that, he worked with his replacement, Gerald Hill, for a further six years.

Anyone dining at Lasham during Mike's time will fondly remember his Saturday evening dining in nights with waitress service, Christmas dinners, scones (*Ed: not rock cakes!*) and curries. His staff were important to him and he trained and mentored a number of young people, all who developed a great respect for Mike and his practices.

In a gliding capacity he flew at least 28 different types of gliders, and had shares in or owned outright a K6e, ASW19, Discus B and Discus 2B. He flew at multiple sites in many different countries including France, Spain, South Africa, Finland and the USA. In 2000 he first visited Santa Cilia airfield in Spain where he regularly returned, often twice a year. Mike came to love this place and he made many life-long friends at the airfield, in the village and in the local town of Jaca. Never one to shy away from hard work or a challenge he thought nothing of hitching his glider to the car and driving to Finland to fly, or from Spain to Slovakia to have his glider refinished.

Mike had a great love for the English language. Communication was important to him and so he had a great desire to talk with people in their own language. He was fluent in Spanish and was also trying to master Welsh, Finnish and Latin as well as challenging himself by trying his hand at German, Hindi, Polish and Portuguese. Laterally much of his learning was done through 'DuoLingo', and a lot of effort was put into practicing every day in order to keep at the top of the leader board. He was also well read in current affairs and liked a good book, often being seen with a large Spanish tome in his hand.

It felt appropriate that his life finally came to an end doing what he was passionate about in his beloved Santa Cilia, the place he considered to be his second home. We will all miss him.

Morag Saunders



Firework night on 28 October. Thanks as ever to Bob Johnson for creating the display

Abi Buckland must have walked under too many ladders. Nick and Fi gave up the restaurant franchise in February 2020 and Abi took it over just as Covid struck. As we all know, the business had to close.

Things were getting back to normal, when on 29 September 2021, the fire in the clubhouse closed the business again. There was only so far that her insurance for business interruption could take her.

The Society has rented a kitchen, replaced the equipment and fitted out the Brown Elephant, but the range of food and the number of external customers are considerably reduced.

Those who know Abi will be aware that she has worked like a Trojan since the fire, especially during the comps, to maintain a high level of service, despite having a young child.



The Society has been supporting, and will support Abi until the new clubhouse is ready. Events such as the Fireworks Evening and the Winter Talks will also help considerably. Even so, the more that we eat in the restaurant, the better, during the forthcoming winter to maintain Abi's enthusiasm.

I haven't forgotten Jaison, at the bar, either. We are grateful to both of them for preserving an essential element of the Society. Like Mike Evans, they both have become part of Lasham's fabric. JMcC



Mike first started gliding at Lasham in the 1950s, though a long break then followed until 1984

This tale is not about a flight, but the aftermath, a somewhat difficult retrieve. The date was Monday 7 August and I joined the grid for an aerotow. My usual way to the sky is the winch, but due to the regional comps a reduced cost (cheap?) to 1500ft was offered.

I pulled off at 1500 into sink. At approximately 1000 feet and 10 minutes after release, the vario promised me that we were climbing.

On this day both Dunstable and Lasham were holding regional comps. It meant that the south of the country was quite crowded. This provided some interesting close encounters in thermals. One of which was very exciting, when someone overtook me as we circled together.

It's difficult to describe how close this felt, but a chum circling below told me said he winced as he saw the passing glider slide over me. But, I digress.

Reaching Didcot via Membury with the sky to the north looking promising, it seemed that a return to Lasham after such a short flight would be to waste the day, so I continued north with many turn-points in mind, but at Bicester I decided this was far enough.

As I turned south the sky looked okay, but as I travelled south I began to sink until I arrived in the area of the M40/A40

junction at no great height and was beginning to feel the closeness of the ground.

At about 900ft, I blundered into a small disturbance which provided some weak lift, I drifted downwind and at about 1400/1500 ft lost the blasted thing. This process was repeated four or five times.

However, I noticed an airstrip on the south side of the A40. This was for me. Unusually I decided to do a proper circuit of the strip and at no great height on the downwind leg felt the surge from thermal. Hallelujah! At 4500ish I was feeling very clever and off we surged once again. After a top-up at Didcot, Lasham beckoned from afar.

As I looked south, I observed a line of spread-out along the Berkshire Downs, but there was cumulus over Wallingford. When I arrived it was dying, but south of Goring I could see that there was a glider circling. Oh deep joy! When I arrived under it, it was KNF, but for me there was nothing: just a few pathetic beeps from the vario, but no gain in height.

What to do? It seemed wise to head in the general direction of Brimpton and hope/pray that one of the wispy bits under the spread-out would offer some upward suck. I was by this time somewhere between 1500/1800ft and you, dear reader, will say, that far below cloud-base, there would be little hope of receiving help from any activity directly under these clouds, and none from the ground without sun on it.

KNF was still with me maybe 1000ft higher and was circling under occasional wisps which I also tried, but to no avail. Then I made the daftest decision, there was in a field to the west of

me with a combine-harvester operating. The field was largish and long into wind. What's not to like? I dismissed it and pushed on to the next wisp, nothing!? Aargh!

Now below me was another very large field nicely aligned into wind. It had obviously been recently combined. There was no significant slope to the field. It had buildings in one corner and even a road going to the buildings. I could turn onto finals easily clear of the trees.

Hmm! That surface looks a bit odd! It had been cultivated, so the surface would be soft and the subsequent landing run short. I reduced the speed at the round-out as low as I could. The tail-wheel touched rapidly followed by the main and I came to a rapid halt.

I left the cockpit and looked under the fuselage. The wheel was buried up to the axle in the soft earth. Fortunately there was no damage to the undercarriage doors or the tail-wheel housing.

My next problem was how to get to civilisation. Between myself and the buildings (which I later found out were known as the Old Piggery), the way was blocked by a large area of rough vegetation, but there appeared to be a track to them from the bottom corner of the field.

After securing the glider, packing the parachute and covering the cockpit, I set off to the bottom corner of the field and the apparent track into the Old Piggery.

The track was for tractor access and deeply rutted and as with the field itself difficult to walk on. When at right angles to the

buildings, I left the track and plunged into the jungle of brambles, stinging nettles and other nasties.

After crossing these and a broken fence, I reached a solid flat surface. The sound of circular sawing came from one of the buildings and I headed towards it. There I met the young man operating it, who seemed very surprised to be approached by a very old man, who seemingly sprung from nowhere.

He was very helpful and told me that his boss was at the wood-yard some distance away and that I had landed on the Yattendon Estate. He also told me that the estate office was on the outskirts of the Yattendon village off the main road into it.

I set off along the estate road towards the wood-yard, it seemed a long walk but it was probably only half a mile. As I approached the entrance to the yard, the foreman and staff exited in the other direction in pick-ups, once again arggh!

So I walked onward to the road where there was a pair of impressive gates. I turned left and after a little way found a sign post to Yattendon pointing in the opposite direction.

I reversed, and when I came back to the estate entrance, I was offered a lift to the office where I met the farm manager. He told me that he could not allow a vehicle onto the field, because it would compact the soil which they were about to sow. I asked if perhaps he could supply us with vehicle with a light 'footprint' to tow the glider to the edge of the field. Tomorrow? Maybe.

I had already contacted my crew (my wife) and explained my predicament and she would meet me outside the pub in the

village. A shorter walk into the village and a shandy outside the pub then followed.

"Beware of the wasps, sir, they are very agitated" the barman said, but they left me alone. I thought it was time to call Lasham, but as I started, they called me. Was I alright they asked. Yes I was. How did they know I had landed? KNF (who has an engine) had seen me land and told them. Thank you KNF. I should have rung Lasham earlier, smacked wrists again.



Ann arrived after following the cross-country route through the lanes and villages as advised by the sat nav. I hitched the trailer to the VW and took it home, planning to retrieve the glider the next day.

I contacted my partners and Peter arrived at 7:30am on the next day (Tuesday). We then travelled in convoy to the retrieve site via the estate office. Because of the rain, they forbade us from driving onto the field. We however did visit the lonely Mosquito apologised to it and said we would return when the field had dried out.

Needless to say we collected a good deal of the field on our shoes walking across it. Peter paced out the shortest distance to the edge of it and I think it was 300ish metres, or yards, whatever?!

After due consideration, there were two alternatives, de-rig and carry the bits to the trailer. This would have needed at least four blokes, preferably more. Or construct a temporary road to the field edge. We elected to build the road. Peter had to go to work and I went home to rest and recuperate.

On the next day, Wednesday I went in search of materials to build the road. The idea was to use lengths of board and move them from tail to nose as we moved the glider forwards. You get the idea. Peter favoured plywood, which I thought that was a sound choice. However, on a visit to B&Q I was seduced by the idea of using scaffolding planks. They were eight feet long 10 inches wide, or in new money 2.4m by 250mm.

I could edge them with 50x25mm wood to prevent the wheel running off. We had a solution. I bought four planks edged them and waited for Thursday, because the weather forecast was for dry weather.

Peter proposed to meet me at the field after work on Thursday. I cleared our proposed removal method with estate



management. Reconnaissance around the edge of the field found a point where the photograph shows the trailer.

The surface of the field whilst flat consisted of lumps of soil which made walking across about 200m even when dry difficult. I carried one of the planks to the glider which exhausted me. Peter arrived. We both carried the other planks the glider, arriving only just able to stand, let alone move.

We then assembled the road. Our next problem was how to get the glider's wheel onto it. After some excavating around the wheel some dragging and pushing, mostly by Peter, the wheel jumped onto the road. Hoo*****ray! The wing dolly was in place and off we went towards the trailer. Peter passed the planks over the wing to me, which saved effort.

We reached the trailer. After that it was a de-rig, making sure we did not leave anything behind. On the next day, Friday, the glider reached Lasham. (I had landed on Monday)

I give great thanks to my syndicate partners, especially to Peter, whose help was invaluable. I had only syndicated with Peter and his son Robert this year, how fortunate was that! Of all the retrieves since returning to gliding in 1984, most of which have been of solo type, this one was probably the hardest.

Mike Vickery

11 November Rhydian Vaughan - The Unknown WarriOr

The Unknown Warrior now lies in Westminster Abbey as a focal point to the tragic cost of the Great War. Whilst many may know where he lies, fewer know how and why he got there. This moving and thought-provoking story is documented in full throughout this lecture. Rhydian spoke last year on the Dam Busters raid, and those who heard him will recall his personal and entertaining account of events.

Sunday 12 November - Mike Evans – A Celebration of His Life

Morag and Merv have very kindly put together a celebration of Mike Evan's life which will be held on Sunday 12 November in the temporary clubhouse. The celebration will take place from 12.30pm after Lasham's Remembrance Day Service

25 November Steve Markham - Flight Testing the Odiham Replica Spitfire:

Many will recall the first talk by Steve a few years ago when he was in the process of building his 80% replica spitfire. Now its flying and he is keen to come and share the stories of his adventures.

9 December Shona Bowman - Restoration of the Cessna Bird Dog (as seen on TV).

The Cessna O-1 Bird Dog is a liaison and observation aircraft. It was the first all-metal fixed-wing aircraft ordered for and by the United States Army following the Army Air Forces' separation from it in 1947.

The Bird Dog had a lengthy career in the U.S. military, as well as in other countries. Emerging from restoration by Shona Bowman and Laure Gregoire in late 2021, this stunning Cessna Bird Dog joined the UK circuit and has already picked up a prestigious award at Goodwood. The restoration was featured on TV last year.

6 January Andy Rankine - Presenting a Recorded Lecture on the work of Sir George Cayley.

Through Derek Piggott's exploits, LGS has had a long association with Sir George Cayley. This lecture celebrates the 250th Anniversary of

his birth. Widely known as the "Father of Aeronautics" Cayley established the modern configuration of an airplane as a fixed-wing flying machine with separate systems for lift, propulsion, and control as early as 1799 (see [Silver Disc](#) machine). In 1804 he flew the first successful glider model of which there is any record.

20 January Jonathan Welch. Trekking to Everest Base camp.

A short presentation about the preparation, planning and conduct of a 15-day expedition to Everest Base Camp and Mount Kala Patthar in September 2022.

After a first career in the Army, Jonathan now works full time in the Defence Industry. As a Lasham member since 2014, he has given a number of presentations previously including 'A Short History of Royal Engineer Bomb Disposal' and 'Countering Improvised Explosive Devices in Afghanistan'. He has a passion for adventure training, being a mountain expedition leader and ski instructor during his service days, he first started gliding in Germany in 1987.

3 February Sue Adcock Protecting Fighter Pilots from High G

One of the challenges experienced by fighter pilots is the high G forces caused by rapid combat manoeuvres. Opened in 1955, the Farnborough centrifuge was the first machine in Britain able to safely test human subjects and their equipment under the effects of high G. For over 60 years, the centrifuge remained at the forefront of UK research and training, contributing to many world-leading technology advances. The only centrifuge designed and manufactured by British engineers, it is a unique and impressive example of 1950's British engineering.

Sue Adcock, a former research scientist, centrifuge subject and pilot (150 hrs in fast jets), will cover a brief history and description of the Farnborough centrifuge, describe the effects of high G on the human body and outline various ways of providing G protection, including her

personal experiences. Her talk will be illustrated with archive film of the centrifuge and in-flight Hawk recordings.

17 February Martin Roberts. The German Occupation of the Channel Islands 1940-1945 and researching and writing an historical novel

Martin has been a Lasham member on and off, since 1995 and currently flies a DG-800B self-launcher. Many will remember some of his previous talks.

Martin has recently written and published his first historical fiction novel: "Walking with a friend in the dark". Copies are available to purchase. It's going to be featured in a book review in a forthcoming edition of Sailplane & Gliding. The subject of my lecture and book is about the German occupation of the Channel Islands between 1940-45. This is a sizeable part of my novel. I have conducted significant archive research and have lots of period photos to show.

Debbie Scholey



How to rig a glider.

Picture of the Horsa supplied
by Robin Sutton

*"The best way to get a bad law repealed is to enforce it strictly"...
Abraham Lincoln*

There are many definitions of 'wisdom', but the Grimshaw one would be simply knowing when to stop. Throughout history all sorts of dodgy characters would have got away with murder, if only they'd known when to stop!

But let's get one thing straight, I'm not against regulations. With 2000' of space under my bum, I'm very glad we have rules about flying. Most of them are the result of many years of hard and scary experience. People died getting us the knowledge we have today.

But the trouble is, as usual, the people who draw up laws a) know nothing about gliders and b) have no idea when to stop. Some of these regulations actually achieve the reverse of what was intended! I'll give you an example:

Rewind back few years to when I converted onto our Grob 102... our old 'SH7' as was the one that got written off! I got the usual new-type briefing. And I knew that if I can't prevent a wing from going down on a launch. I must release the cable *immediately*. It's a very sensible rule.

Although 99 times out of a hundred you can easily pick up a wingtip that has touched the ground, its the 100th time that's the problem. If the wingtip hits a molehill, a rabbit hole, or a grass tussock... (or in our case... a large stunned hare) and if the tip digs in... horrendous things happen very fast.

A crash possibility of 1 in 100 (or anything remotely like it) is completely unacceptable. So this is a very sensible rule for a not-too-obvious hazard. The trouble is that, even with my long arms, when I'm strapped into a fully reclining position, I could barely reach the Astir's yellow cable release knob. The only way to hold it firmly is

to release my shoulder straps so I can lean forward but there are three problems with this.

- 1) The shoulder straps are there to protect you in the event of any sudden deceleration (a noted characteristic of crashes)
- 2) My head hits the canopy and
- 3) With the huge acceleration of a winch launch, leaning forward can be impossible!

The obvious thing to do is simply to extend the yellow knob mounting so people can reach it but apparently this would be illegal.

'You can't modify a glider in any way not recommended by the manufacturer' I was told... by absolutely everyone! 'But this is a serious hazard' I protested *"Surely it's madness to hinder cable release in way at all?"*

I've got long arms and I can barely reach the release knob. What about pilots whose arms are shorter than mine?" Replies were muffled.

Eventually a short Prusik loop* from my old mountaineering kit solved the problem. It was very old but never used in anger, so still ok for this***. I looped the 9mm Perlon sheath through itself behind the knob and laid it across my left thigh. At last I could release the cable instantly and without struggle.

But every time I used it I thought "THIS IS BONKERS"! My launch safety did not depend on carefully enforced rules at all, but on a tatty bit of old climbing kit!

The other day when I forgot to bring my Prusik loop to the launch-point, I was told to look around the cable-retrieve truck. To my surprise someone had made three similar loops... presumably for just such a situation... and placed them so they wouldn't get lost... or specifically attributed!



"EBENEZER MELCHIZADEK GRIMSHAW... YOU ARE HEREBY CHARGED WITH WILFULLY EXTENDING YOUR YELLOW KNOB OF RELEASE BY ALMOST TWO INCHES. HOW DO YOU PLEAD?"

I was able to deduce from this that, somewhere amongst us, there must be a minimum of two other LGS members who also don't have orangutan arms.

This was most encouraging but still BONKERS! Why on earth doesn't the legislation simply say that *any modification not supported by the manufacturer must have the written approval of the*

measurements had been marked... like a ruler. Apparently he had to place one end against a fixed point and then measure the joystick position for various airspeeds. The problem was he needed at least three hands and two sets of eyes. One hand had to hold the measuring stick in the right spot while the other had to operate the joystick. Whilst doing this he had to note the airspeed and write down the measurements. All this at the same time and without dropping the ruler or colliding with anyone!

The glider (being American) was huge, and the fuselage was deep. If our test pilot dropped his measuring stick in flight he'd probably never even find it... let alone pick it up again. Obviously what he needed was a P2 to fly the glider... concentrating on exact airspeeds, while the testing engineer P1 concentrated on exact measurements. But I was told this was not allowed. "This permit to fly only allows us to have one pilot on board" he said. To have a second pilot we'd need a certificate of airworthiness! "But that's crazy" I said "You need two pilots to get that. It's like Catch 22... what you're attempting is impossible!" "Not impossible" our stalwart test pilot replied "just very very difficult."

relevant senior engineer and the CFI? It would be so simple!

The answer, I suggest, is that the people who drew up the legislation had never been anywhere near a glider. And we are so few. We happy few... if this was an issue with airline passengers, the law would be changed immediately!

Another example: I was assisting Richard Moyse with the GHC's huge old American 2-seater... the one used for training pilots of troop-carrying gliders in WW2.

"It's about the only one left" I was told. "We've restored it, but it's not on any UK register and has only a permit to fly. To get it properly certificated we have to carry out all sorts of measurements and tests."

Wow... this was interesting... real life test flying! To my astonishment our test pilot produced a flat wooden stick, on which various distance

Nose-to-nose encounters with authorities on the ground can be surprisingly entertaining:

Rewind to 8 August 2015. One of our members... let's call him 'Liam'... was getting low near the M4 motorway. The fields were full of crop and he was looking for the Firs Farm strip but couldn't see it. However an disused airfield had lots of beautifully mown straight grass areas in between mysterious rectangular mounds. This was RAF Welford. Look it up. He saw that Welford was not in a prohibited or a restricted zone, so it wouldn't be technically illegal to land there. He knew it had something to do with the military, but beyond that... well.. ignorance is bliss.

The grass was beautifully mown... and 'Liam' made a good landing on it avoiding an irresponsibly placed 3 ft post. He came to a halt by

one of the many mysterious mounds and opened the canopy to an eerie silence. He thought he'd better call Colin Watt on the phone and explain where he was. He was told to stay by the glider in case there were guard dogs!

Before long, a US-registered Toyota HiLux arrived, and a very aggressive man with an American accent emerged pointing a gun at him. Scary.

'Liam' explained what had happened, and that he'd like to arrange for his crew to come and collect him and the glider. Knowing the Americans' propensity for shooting first and asking the right questions only after a respectful interval to honour the dead (and without even a 'u'), he decided perhaps best not to ask for an aerotow!

Eventually armed British MoD Police arrived. They told the American they were now in charge of the situation, and that he should stand down.

The MoD police officers were much more friendly, introducing themselves by their first names. They politely did not draw their guns. Nevertheless 'Liam' was told he was being officially 'detained' and cautioned *"on suspicion of causing criminal damage to Crown property!"* His glider, they explained, was being seized under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (yes, really)... gliders being fairly terrifying things! However being thoroughly British, the MoD guys then asked 'Liam' if he would like a cup of tea?

On the way to the guard room, all became clear. RAF Welford is one of the largest USAF ammunition stores in Western Europe. It's owned by the MoD but operated by the USAF '420th Munitions Squadron' for storing 'heavy munitions' which are housed in those lines of raised underground bunkers.

The British guards explained that they intended to check out Liam's identity, and if he was who he said he was, there would be no further

action. They made him tea and gave him a sandwich, and left him at a picnic table outside their office. After lots of questions, they finally allowed a Lasham retrieve crew to collect him and the glider.

Over the next hour or two, 'Liam' chatted about gliding with the guards, and they told him about an MoD Police Museum that they thought he really ought to visit! Eventually Bob Bickers and Paul Haliday appeared with the trailer which was carefully inspected. The officers even helped with the derigging. However MoD hospitality fell short of allowing any pictures for Rising Air!

But the most entertaining tale comes from another well-known LGS member. This chap is known to be totally potty about vintage gliders. We do have such people at Lasham! Again, we must preserve anonymity so we'll have to call him 'Gary'.

One day 'Gary' set off in his Grunau Baby... an open cockpit high-winged machine with struts... from 1948. It's a bit like a tiny Slingsby T21 except it has only a tiny open cockpit, and a small skid. That's it. No wheel... nope... not even a little'un. That's the fun of vintage gliding! 'Gary' set off north from Lasham on a good day with a 10-15 knot westerly wind.

He cleared Basingstoke, but noticed that his northerly track was now veering east, towards the London TMA. As flying machines go, Grunau Babies are not noted for penetration or performance.

By this time 'Gary' was down to about 1800 feet and with a glide angle of only 17 at best he decided to land out at Blackbushe Airport. Using normal procedures he contacted them on a hand-held radio. Which is when the fun started:

"Hello Blackbushe, this is Glider AQN". (Ed: Go on an RT course please!)

"Aircraft calling repeat full callsign."

"Blackbushe this is Glider AQN."

"Aircraft calling repeat your full call sign with G suffix."

"Glider AQN, I don't have a G-registration. I am an Annex II Glider and intend to land at your field."

A bit of a pause:

"Very well, its Runway 25 left hand circuit wind is 10 knots westerly."

Glider AQN, Roger. I am downwind now and will be landing on the grass next to the runway."

Another pause:

"Negative Glider AQN we are not licensed for grass operations. Land on the runway."

"Glider AQN I do not have any wheels. So I have to land on the grass."

Another pause:

"All received AQN. The Airport Fire services have been alerted."

Gary's private mutterings at this point are, sadly, not recorded and were hopefully not transmitted! He touched down gently on the grass outside the café... much to the amazement of onlookers... and stopped in a few feet. As one does.

Five minutes later not one, but *two* fire engines rock up with blue lights flashing... eager to spray the entire glider with foam!! So here's a question for you: Imagine yourself in this situation... if you can. How do you stop hastily scrambled fire engines in full emergency mode from spraying you with foam? Your answers on a postcard please!

You may find all the above hard to believe and I don't blame you. It

is all very strange. If not actually barking. But you get used to it all... in time!

Ebenezer Grimshaw

* see [Prusik Hitch](#).. used for climbing a rope without using gizmos

** By sheer bad luck it was the 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima bomb and protesters were gathered at the perimeter. This despite British nuclear warheads being kept 350 miles away at Coulport, north of the Clyde!

*** I mean I'd never had to use it to climb out of a crevasse or get back up the rope following a sudden cornice collapse. If you're planning anything that dodgy you should tie the two loops: one long, one short, onto your rope *before you start*. You'll never be able to extract them from your back pack and tie them on correctly whilst dangling, wriggling, shouting, gasping and freezing!

STOP PRESS. Make sure your trailer is tied down securely to prevent it damaging the trailer s next to it. Now!

(all lists are alphabetical. Some posts are part-time and some are by volunteers)

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Abi Buckland "The Flight Deck" Restaurant
07850 166393

Jaison Beeson "51 Degrees North" Bar
07585-954578

Other roles

Dave Hopgood (Tugmaster)
Colin Watt (Airspace)
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Caravans - Serena Lambre
Competitions - Christine Bullimore
Flying - Colin Watt

Volunteers

Throughout the Society there are many other volunteers and occasional employees. These are too numerous to mention but they always have our thanks.

Lasham Trust

Donations to make Lasham even better. The trustees are: Graham Garnett, Nigel Mallender, and the Society's chairman.

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