

March 2024

LASHAM

Rising Air Magazine

Women Mynding
Our CFI
Australian land-outs
Pearls of wisdom

Photo: Paul Haliday



By way of introduction, my name is Barrie Elliott, and I am currently the interim CFI at LGS which is a role I am proud to hold. Colin Watt will now be concentrating solely on engineering.

It is important that I (we) thank Colin for his tireless dedication to this demanding role for the last 16 years or so and wish him the best of luck and health going forwards as he takes on the role of Chief Engineer full time. Colin will also be out flying on occasions and I will continue to value his wisdom, council and examiner skills going forwards. Thank you Colin.

I am not new to the art of gliding. My father was passionate about gliding. I am pleased to say that his enthusiasm is also instilled in me, and so many joyous days were spent on airfields gliding.

My first recollection was when I was aged around four in Kenya, and I got up at 3am to travel to Near East Gliding Club which was based at Nakuru airfield, which some 90 miles or so from Nairobi where we lived. My father would take me and my brother there for entire weekends.

Moving on 12 years later, I joined the RAF and spent many happy years gliding (I mean working) in Scotland, Germany (two tours) and various units around the UK.

In those days it was possible (due to your gliding experience), to get 'preferential postings' to units that hosted RAFGSA gliding clubs. Even though military postings are often only for three years, this ensured that there was always sufficient experience at these clubs to keep them vibrant. Throughout these postings I held various roles, ranging from "aircraft member", "MT member", Treasurer, DCFI and CFI. My

penultimate posting was to the RAFGSA Centre at Bicester when I succeeded as CFI from the late, great Terry Joint and held this post for seven years, before finally completing my service at Odiham (Thanks are due to Bob Bickers who sorted that move).

During my career in the RAF and membership of the RAFGSA (of which I am a lifetime member) I completed all three diamonds, regularly participated in regional, National and international regional competitions, I also flew the first declared two-seater 750 km diploma flight (with a young Derren Francis). Over the years I have enhanced my gliding qualifications and hold a Full Cat and Senior Examiner rating, a CAA MGIR FI rating and a towing rating.

Anyway, enough about me. Needless to say I have gained some significant experience along the way!!

Fun, safe and well supervised flying

The responsibilities of being a CFI of all gliding clubs is huge and Lasham is no exception. Arguably, there may be more responsibility due to the numerous 'other' forms of aviation running concurrently with the gliding at Lasham that not many gliding clubs have to contend with.

It is not possible to maintain the adequate supervision required for continued fun, safe flying on my own. Fortunately, I have a good deputy in Sam Coole at the moment who assists me greatly. It is my intention to recruit a second DCFI for this season.



Barrie & the late great Terry Joint

Having three full-time flying staff will support the level of supervision required on a busy and vibrant airfield. In addition this will enable one staff member the freedom to run or co-ordinate additional ongoing training requirements.

Examples are the instructor refresher courses, BI courses, TMG conversion training, seminars, cross-country training and Assessment of Competences (AoC's) required when converting to Part SFCL. (The current planned date for completion of conversion to Part SFCL is September 2025.) My vision therefore is for one DCFI AB-Initio (Sam) who will have oversight of all training up to SPL issue level, and a second DCFI, DCFI Advanced (TBA) who will have oversight of continuation training taking people from SPL licence (Bronze C) developing further to cross country training, Silver C and Full Gold C certification.

There are quite a few people that appear unsure of how to progress post-solo that require guidance on the 'next steps' and this is also true from pilots that now have a shiny SPL licence wanting to further their training up to and including Gold C. Having two DCFIs should provide a clear pathway. The job advert is already out for this post so if you are interested, contact Gavin or me.

I have used this three-tier system before to great effect at other clubs and it works well.

Buddy/mentor system

In my view It would be good practice to set up a buddy/mentor type system for newish members as well. The idea being new members would be matched up with a "buddy" who will assist initially with introductions and aid them to settle in and feel part of the club.

They can also then be introduced to airfield safety awareness, correct ground handling practices, buggy retrieve training, cable retrieve training etc. that will hopefully help to engage the new members from

the outset and help bring out the club ethos and spirit which I believe can only be for the good. If any early solo type members are prepared to assist in a buddy or mentor type role, please let myself or Sam know.

Ground handling

Ground handling continues to cause concern and the latest damage to the rudder of 778 is a good example of where equipment is getting damaged unnecessarily. Nobody sets out to damage a glider, I get that, and I do want to maintain a no-blame culture. But I do ask, please, that whenever moving a glider, by hand or using a buggy that members maintain a high level of awareness at all times until the glider is back at the launch point or final destination. A few simple pointers to remember please:

- Always hold the into-wind wing. *(You can use your weight to hold down the wing, whereas it is harder on the opposite side, Ed)*
- Have a second person walking between the wing and fuselage to ensure the glider does not over run and cause a 'bow' in the towing cable.
- Balance the glider on the main wheel when turning, if no tail dolly is being used.
- When nearing the launch point with a buggy, stop well short of the glider in front, and manhandle the last bit.
- If you are on a wing tip, always follow the buggy even if it is going in what you consider to be the wrong direction. Not following the buggy is a sure way to accelerate to a possible impact with something.
- Buggy driver, always keep an eye on the glider crew (looking back or using the mirrors) in case they require you to stop at any stage. Good communication prior to moving off is always worthwhile and the brief should include the buggy driver being prepared to STOP if they hear a clear STOP from the glider crew. *(Don't doze! Keep looking back. Ed)*

Casual List

Since I have taken over there has been some interesting debate on the current booking system. One consequence of the booking system appears to have reduced flying overall, as some members don't turn up, if they do not have a slot booked. Possibly, as a direct result of this there can often be lack of suitable manpower at the launch point to run an efficient safe well supervised launch point.

I wish to develop a casual booking system which will run alongside the current booking system (half the two-seaters will be on booking, the other half will be on the casual list) starting 1 April.

This will allow members to add their names in advance onto a casual flying list for each day. For this to work however we will also need casual instructors to add their names as well! There will be no point in having 12 or so casual list students but no instructors to teach them.

Hopefully this will also encourage earlier flying on a given day. The current trend is that everybody waits for the briefing before setting up and going flying. This does work, but it means that there is a delay in getting equipment and gliders out on the field.

If we are going to introduce a casual list, there should be more appetite to start earlier and whilst briefings are important, it is not necessary for all members to listen to it before getting equipment out on the field, especially if all they are going to do is training or local flying.

Key information such as jet movements can be displayed out on the control wagon at the launch point. Naturally for those pilots wanting to fly cross-country the main briefing is useful and to be fair those pilots are only looking for 1 launch a day at the optimum time so do not need to fly earlier.

All I can say is that I will give the casual flying list a try and based on the support of both students and instructors, I will decide if it is a success or not.

Group system

The group flying system works better on some days than others but there is no reason why the flying groups should not continue as they used to, specifically the evening groups when the nights extend. Main criteria, as always, is to have a competent instructor supervising this activity. I cannot pretend I have fully got my head round all the groups flying that has historically taken place at Lasham over the past decades but I know that it works and is well attended. I will meet with all the relevant personnel to discuss this.

Key events in 2024

The 2024-year planner is now out and available to see on the LGS website. There are a few events worthy of mention here though.

National Women's Go Gliding Weekend (NWGGW)

The National Women's Go Gliding Weekend on 27-28 April 2024 is a BGA-led event which aims to introduce more women and their companions to gliding by providing a friendly and informative welcome.

There are currently 28 clubs participating. Lasham GS are pleased to be participating in this event and thank Anne Knight, our newly appointed Women's Ambassador, for leading on this event. If you are able to assist or require further information, contact office@lasham.org.uk

Go Gliding

Another event linked with the NWGGW above, but separate, is being run by Liz Sparrow over the same weekend. This is a cross-country development weekend for up-and-coming women pilots using a mix of single and two-seat gliders. At the end of this weekend two pilots will be selected to share a back seat in

Duo 620 at the 20 Metre Nationals to give them a really good cross-country racing experience.

Sisteron

Duo Discus 4 returns from a total refinish in a few weeks. Colin mentioned a summer expedition to Sisteron in the last Rising Air. There have been some administrative nightmares around organising the expedition this year but Gavin has been working with Sisteron and others to break down the barriers and you would all have received an email by now asking interested parties to apply. Good luck with your application. G Dale will be carrying out the instructing down there during last week in May and the first three weeks in June.

Comps

- 18M & 20M nationals will be held 25 May - 2 June.
- Lasham Regionals 17-25 August.

Aboyne

Aboyne is again planned for this autumn. The dates are 6-25 October.

Compass Training

Throughout the season, when not being used for Bronze to Silver and Silver and beyond courses the Duo Discus will also be available for the Compass training flights, as normal through the booking system.

Please make the most of this beautiful glider as it has been a little under-utilised of late and naturally we want to keep it in the air where possible, not sat in the hangar.

New Members

Whilst it is true to say that Lasham has in excess of 800 members, it is still vital that we continue to feed new younger members in at the bottom to continue to support gliding going forwards. Many of the new members that continue after their first glider flight are those

that were introduced by a friend or family member personally. If we each introduced just 1 friend/family member to gliding over the next few years, we will all help to keep gliding going forwards in future years. Have a think about who you may want to introduce.

Conclusion

I just finally wanted to say that I do try to lead by example. When not directly acting as the launch point controller, I will normally be out at the launch point, hooking on cables, holding wings, driving the retrieve vehicle, collecting gliders, looking for loose articles in the bottom of gliders etc.

I do however have eyes in the back of my head. Sam & I will always follow through on what we see and consider to be a minor transgression. Please take the 'debrief' on the chin and take it in the spirit it is intended. The whole purpose of this is to stop a major transgression taking place that may damage a glider or worse, hurt someone.

I do not bite so come say hello and introduce yourself when you can. I cannot promise to remember everyone's name, but I will try!

Thanks to members that have been on airfield over the past few months enjoying the winter weather. Thank you to the reception staff for their continued support and a special thank you to Serena, John Brooke and Al Meredith for their efforts keeping as much of the fleet flying as possible.

Finally, remember, this is all about FUN, SAFE, flying. Have a great safe season.



Barrie

Winter mostly behind us now and not too surprisingly the GHC hasn't been doing that much flying in recent months. In fact as I'm finishing writing this report (17 Feb) we haven't as yet flown a GHC glider in 2024 thanks to the garbage weather!

The focus in the winter has switched to our workshop with routine CofAs/(ARCs) and repair work, plus continuing the long-term restoration projects we're running.

Schweizer TG3



Fantastic nose art by Ruby Stocks

The restoration of this 1942 Second World War is now complete. It was used by the USAAF for the initial training of WACO CG-4a combat glider pilots.

Having completed the test flying programme to the satisfaction of the BGA's Technical Committee, we have also supplied their requested additional data.

The last piece of info requested was "What glue was used in the TG3" and amazingly we managed to get absolutely precise details. We have now been advised that the BGA have agreed to a full CofA and so she should be flying regularly by early spring. As a 1942 glider with huge provenance, we expect a lot of our members will want her in their log book. However, note we need to be in physical possession of the CofA before our normal membership can start flying.

Spalinger S21h

We believe that this Swiss glider last flew in the early 1960s.

This picture was taken in 2018 on the occasion of its first rigging at Lasham. Since then it has been fully restored: a truly enormous effort led by Gary Pullen with much assistance from Ray Whittaker.



Colin Simpson in front cockpit, Ray Whittaker in the rear

The glider is now awaiting the start of its test flying programme. Like the TG3 a Spalinger S21 has never before flown in the UK, and the BGA's Technical Committee understandably said they did not want to have to deal with two totally new types at the same time.

With the TG3 finally across the finishing line we are now asking the BGA for a "Permit to Fly" so we can start the test flying programme. (*What sort of glue did the Swiss use? Ed*)

Bolkow Phoebus 17c

This glider was originally Surrey & Hants "265" who acquired it in Dec 1970. This type was the first mass-produced glass-fibre glider. Long-term Lasham members will recall that the Surrey and Hants Club entered the glass era with another Phoebus, "266", which was followed by "265".

It was last flown in 2001 and now under a detailed inspection/restoration led by Geoff Clark. We hope to have her flying again in the late summer of 2024.

This is the first glass glider acquired by the GHC. "Shock Horror" cry died-in-the-wool (or should that be "died in the wood"?) traditionalists! However, no-one can deny it is very suitable given its Lasham provenance.

Elliot's of Newbury Eton Primary



A EoN Primary flying at Old Warden 2013 air display, but it was not ours

This glider was first flown in 1951, and last flown 1962. One of our GHC members, Norman Jones, actually flew this very glider in the early 1950s at Maidstone Grammar School. Three months ago I was very unsure whether we would get the glider airworthy again. Perhaps we would have to settle on just a cosmetic restoration. Now after

some fantastic work done by Steve Pullen and his team I am confident she will be taking to the Lasham air, most likely mid to late summer. You have to be bold to fly a primary glider.

Flying week

As I said in the intro: "nought" so far, but looking ahead to when "Lady Weather" remembers how to smile, we are hopeful for the flying week. This is scheduled for Saturday 18 May – Friday 24 May (Two classes of Nationals start on Sat 25 May). Full details will be announced in the GHC Spring Newsletter which should be going out at the beginning of April. Currently expecting the available gliders will be Bocian, Bergfalke, TG3, Foka 4, Zugvogel 3, Mu13, maybe the Pirat.

New gliders

We have not acquired any new gliders since the TG3 from the Imperial War Museum, Duxford in May 2022. We do get gliders offered to us pretty frequently. But usually the response is a "Thanks, but no thanks" due to a combination of

- We do not see them as particularly interesting
- They and/or the trailer are in poor to very poor condition
- We have already one in good condition with no need for two.

What's at the top of our "Wanted" List? - a Slingsby Kite 1 followed by an EoN Olympia 419.

Web-site

Our "new" web-site is about a year old. It is now receiving regular updates and, from reports, is well received by those accessing it. We still want an "Articles and Videos" section available for all, and a members' section that will be "passworded". These enhancements are led by our webmaster, Paul Jackman assisted by me.

Winter talks

A series of Sunday talks has been held in the viewing room of the GHC workshop over the winter, they've definitely been a success. The final one is at 16:00 on Sunday Mar 17 and will last about an hour. The talk is on two topics: Gary Pullen on the restoration of the Spalinger, and Robin Birch on glues used in wooden gliders.

Second hangar extension

Our two main hangars are same size 30m x 30m. They were finished in 2013 and 2018. Both cost approx. £135k. We have needed more storage space for a while now so an extension to the second hangar, 24m by 24m, is intended to supply this. However, it has been on hold for the past three years due to COVID and, above all, the soaring costs of steel and concrete. It was last estimated at £175k but it will now be higher. It will be a topic for our next CoM meeting.

Glyn Bradney

21 people – mostly, but not all, women – representing 13 clubs naturally including Lasham braved the February weather and headed for the hills. On our last Mynd trip, we worked diligently at eating, drinking and talking but the only flying was when we stood on the bungee meadow and were literally blown away!

Happily this time the weather permitted. Ridge, thermal and wave lift was available – and cloud-base even reached ~1000' above the hill at one point. Friday was "short-west-launched" ridge and wave fun for those who were able to skive pre-weekend. Although there was too much cloud to get high in the wave, we could swan around over the valley, gently rising and enjoying the view of horribly wet fields beneath before scurrying back to the ridge.

Saturday had a cloud-base at around five fathoms for most of the day. This meant cake, briefings and field spotting, once we could see the bottom of the valley. Sunday didn't look promising to start with, but got over its hangover around lunchtime to open up to blue skies with ridge, streets and a tantalising suggestion of wave. And as ever, the Myndies were a lovely welcoming bunch. The bar was always open. Helen and Dave provided ridiculously large quantities of food to aid our wing loading.

Women Gliding is a great community for all who identify as glider pilots and as women, plus many male supporters. Find us on womengliding.co.uk, join the chat and support at Women Gliding Community on Facebook, or come along to one of the events.

Not sure about 'women-specific' events? Come and talk to us, We're running a Women Gliding XC development weekend on 27/28 April alongside Lasham's National Women Go Gliding Weekend event. It's too late to apply for a two-seater place for the XC development weekend, but definitely not too late to come and join us on task!

Liz Sparrow



National Women's Go Gliding Weekend

Lasham
Airfield

27th & 28th April 2024
10am - 4pm



- Learn something new, no matter your age!
- Get out in the open air
- Be inspired!

Only £80 for one day. Price includes a briefing, an introductory training flight, introduction to ground operations, a flight in the Simulator and an optional non-training flight in a high performance glider (at extra cost) and 2 months club membership for anyone who wants to start training.

To book please ring: 01256 384900

Lasham is taking part in the BGA initiative of a National Women Go Gliding Weekend on 27-28 April, as are many gliding clubs around the UK. A quick scan around the clubhouse tells us that diversity in gliding is a problem that needs to be addressed if our sport is going to survive and flourish. The number of women active in the sport has been only approximately 7% for many years. The objective of this weekend is to introduce glider flying to women and hopefully generate some new female members.

This will be an excellent opportunity to get your female partners and friends involved in the sport that you love. The weekend is aimed at women who think that they might actually want to learn to fly, rather than those who just want to come along for a jolly, although there will be no obligation to take things further after the weekend. There is no age limit and no prior experience is necessary.

Participants will sign-up for one of the weekend days which will comprise a trial flight to 2500', introduction to ground operations, a flight in the Simulator and an optional (extra-cost) non-training flight in a private 2-seater. There will also be 2 months free club membership for anyone who wants to start training – all for the stunning price of £80. Bookings are open now – just ring or email the office.

Obviously we want to get this event advertised as widely as possible, so please consider supporting us by printing the attachment to an email sent to all members on 20 February (or pick up a few copies of the poster from the office). Pass it around or sticking it on a notice-board at any other clubs, societies or institutions that you have access to. And please ask your female partners and friends to do the same. I'm thinking: golf and other sports clubs, business clubs, Women's Institutes, Further Education colleges etc etc.

With many thanks for your support.

Anne Knight



It was all going so well

It was all going so well. Everyone else had stayed on the ground, but I had declared Moree from Lake Keepit, 330km O/R.

There was a brisk tail-wind helping me to my turn-point at 107km/h, and until 90km from home, the lift had been strong. I was still averaging 100 into 19kt headwind. However, I was now flying over hilly terrain. The thermals were getting choppy.

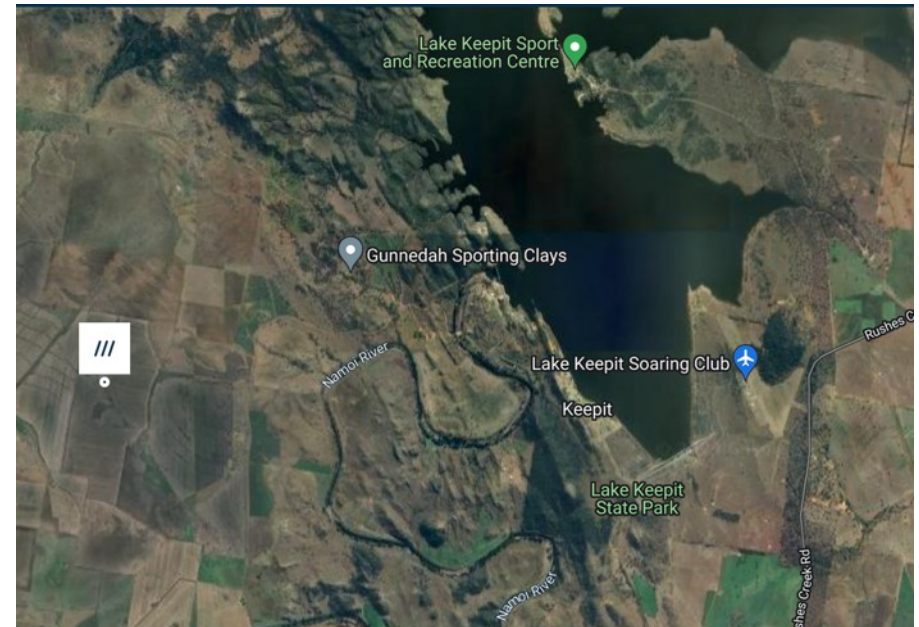
I thought that things would improve once I got back over the flat terrain, so I rejected some scrappy lift, and aimed for some good-looking cumulus further on.

The strong wind made the thermals broken, but I pushed on to a marginal final glide. Six km across the lake was the runway, but glider's owner had set the safety margin to 300 feet. This had almost gone. The headwind seemed to be stronger.

Although other members at Lake Keepit had paddled in their careers, there was no way I was going over the lake, or the surrounding forest, on a worsening glide in someone else's glider.

So I turned away looking for more lift low down and tried to sneak up a little to the west. A few momentary bubbles tantalised, but the outcome became inevitable. I chose a ploughed stubble field in which

I stopped quickly with undercarriage doors still attached. It was 4:30pm when I called in. I was 8km away from the airfield. What3Words gave my position to the nearest metre as benches/stalwarts/surfacing



The glider's owner, Allan Barnes, who lived about 20 miles away wanted to be involved, so the crew (Bob Johnson & Martin Hollowell) waited for him. After carefully working out which farm tracks to take, and negotiating locked gates, they arrived after three hours on the other side of the fence and ditch on the adjacent farm about 300 metres from the glider.

The route to my field required another half-hour detour. As it was getting dark, we decided to leave the glider for the night and collect it the next day. An aerotow might have been possible, but no-one was totally convinced, most of all Allan.

The communal airfield car was sick, so Tully Munro, the tug-pilot, offered to drive us after the day's flying. How the airfield car became sick was a long story about the previous French tug-pilot who had managed to write off a Discus 2 in the Pilliga Forest, and sink two boats on the lake, before driving into a signpost near to the airfield.



A slightly different crew: Tully, Bob Johnson and Simon Harding from Challock, set off having looked more closely at Google Earth. After calling in at a house to the surprise of its occupant, we were directed to the farm of Brett Knapman. His house was deserted, but Tully observed that the air-conditioning was on, so "he couldn't be far away". We tracked down the "cocky" (Australian for farmer) down under a large tractor in his barn. He was grateful that we had taken the trouble to contact him.

We then ventured into the fields, doubling back when we encountered ditches, and

grounding the trailer sometimes on some switchbacks which prevent soil erosion. I now know what sorghum looks like.

We reached the trailer and de-rigged, though keeping a look-out for snakes. The black snake that we had seen scouting ahead for the car is "probably the least dangerous elapid snake in Australia. Despite the number of bites received every year, very few human deaths have resulted". That is good to know. Unlike the previous day, this time the whole round trip took three hours.

The second flight was on my last day before my return to the UK. I did not want a similar land-out so when David Fagan suggested a flight in the club's Duo Discus XLT, I jumped at the chance.

The forecast said that that there would be heavy showers in the afternoon, but David was confident that we could work round those. Once again, we went up to Moree and, just as we were going to Wee Waa, Dave's phone rang. Tully warned us that a big thunderstorm was approaching. Keep it. After consulting the rainfall radar on the phone, we decided to head back.

Again at about 90km out from home, we checked in, only to be told that our airfield was currently unlandable. We crept a little closer and even climbed almost up to a theoretical final glide, but instead we just had to circle for an hour waiting for the rain to pass.

Eventually we could head back, but attempts to get the extra height proved fruitless. David spotted a sunny patch and claimed that a thermal would eventually appear there. It took about twenty minutes to bubble and wasn't really worth the wait. We were now lower, in worsening conditions.

After a careful examination of a field from about 1700 feet AGL on a provisional downwind leg, David started the engine. As our final glide



Showers ahead

became more certain, our speed increased, so I was able this time to approach runway 14 at speed a few feet above the lake. It wasn't really a land-out, so I count it as a half.



It is always interesting to hear another pilot's views on cross-country. For instance, David had good ideas on where to look under large clouds. I think every pilot should take the opportunity to fly a cross-country with a good pilot in Lasham's Duo every so often.

John McCullagh



Sunset at Lake Keepit

Some old favourite aviation aphorisms

When my sadly-deceased friend Sarah Davies (then Grundy) and I were student pilots, we began to jot down odds and ends of aeronautical wisdom (and humour) which helped to stimulate us and entertain us during the many hours of circuit bashing, check flights, and hanging around the launch point. I offer them now in the hope that they will provoke some thought – and perhaps help to make the air a safer place for all pilots, whether *ab initios* or pundits with a Gold C and three Diamonds.

- Time in the air will alone make a good pilot (*Hints for Pilots*, 1913).
- It's not just the hours that count, but what you do with the hours.
- All aircraft bite fools.
- The best safety device in any aircraft is a well-trained pilot.
- It is better to be on the ground wishing you were in the air than in the air wishing you were on the ground.
- When bad weather approaches, the fools press on, the sensible land but the wise did not take off in the first place.
- Take off is optional: landing is inevitable.
- An extra five knots for the wife and kids
- If a pilot buries his head in the cockpit, sooner or later someone will come to bury the rest of him.
- To survive, a pilot needs at least two of the following altitude, airspeed, and brains.
- There are old pilots and bold pilots – but no old, bold pilots (at Lasham, perhaps with the exception of the late, great Derek Piggott DM).
- The superior pilot uses his superior judgement to avoid having to use his superior skill.

Douglas MacMillan

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Photo taken by Sam Coole after my Viv's first solo flight last month

I returned to gliding in September 2023, almost twenty years after enjoying a "learn to glide" course at Lasham. Despite this monumental procrastination, I always intended to experience the excitement of gliding again.

While I am driving between home, in the northern Lake District, and Lasham every month, I enjoy using the journey to think about the lovely people I've encountered, the terrible jokes I've heard and to consider the learning points that have presented themselves. Some of those thoughts have been distilled into the following five life lessons:

"You wanna fly, you got to give up the shit that weighs you down" ~ Toni Morrison

Learning from errors is the route to mastery. Still, failure can be tough. Although much of my working life is focused on growth mind-set and resilience, whilst gliding, I spend a staggering amount of time kicking my heels atop Mount Stupid. Here is where the Japanese concept of *oubaitori* or the American equivalent, *embrace the suck*, can assist. Having learned to sidestep the merest whiff of double entendre in the clubhouse, we'll focus on *oubaitori*. Describing how Springtime ushers

the blossoming of each tree at its own unique pace, *oubaitori* has been a reminder to exercise patience around expectations and progress.

"The two most powerful warriors are patience and time" ~ Leo Tolstoy

During my first two weeks at Lasham, the weather was amazing. Each day was crammed with an impressive number of launches. I scarcely considered patience. Only whilst studying my instructor's steely, inscrutable poker face for signs of surrender, did patience cross my mind. These people have skills, you know.

I committed to fly for a week every month, hoping to progress during each visit. Patience and time were about to be tested. When the wind and rain hammered relentlessly, I burned to fill Kipling's unforgiving minute. The clouds delivered a silver lining. People were generous with their time, explaining the meaning of life, dark matter and sometimes, even, gliding theory. Others offered Instruction in the flight simulator - invaluable for building confidence and getting to grips with tasks like spinning and aerotowing.

"Conversation about the weather is the last refuge of the unimaginative" ~ Oscar Wilde

If you've spent time in the clubhouse on days when St Jude refuses to intercede in the lost cause of British weather, you'll appreciate that, here, Wilde is wrong. Far from being the last refuge of the unimaginative, conversations about the weather are either full of practical meteorological advice or a seamless segue to comedy gold. When quick-witted punch-lines are delivered by a pro, bad weather becomes an opportunity to watch a table full of frustrated pilots erupt into laughter. There is *always* something to learn on a rainy day.

"He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead; his eyes are closed" ~ Albert Einstein

Awesome views are a striking feature of gliding. The smoky contours of the South Downs. A monochrome shimmer from the distant coast. Dynamic colours across the landscape. All pretty awesome. Admiring

the elegance of glider design prompts a similar sense of awe. Useful to know that psychologists at the University of Berkeley have closely researched the impact of awe. Of all the positive emotions that can help build resilience, increase positivity and quiet our inner critic, the experience of awe is most powerful. The next time you spot a fledgling pilot, open-mouthed, staring into space, pause before assuming aberrance. You may be witnessing a magical part of the learning process.

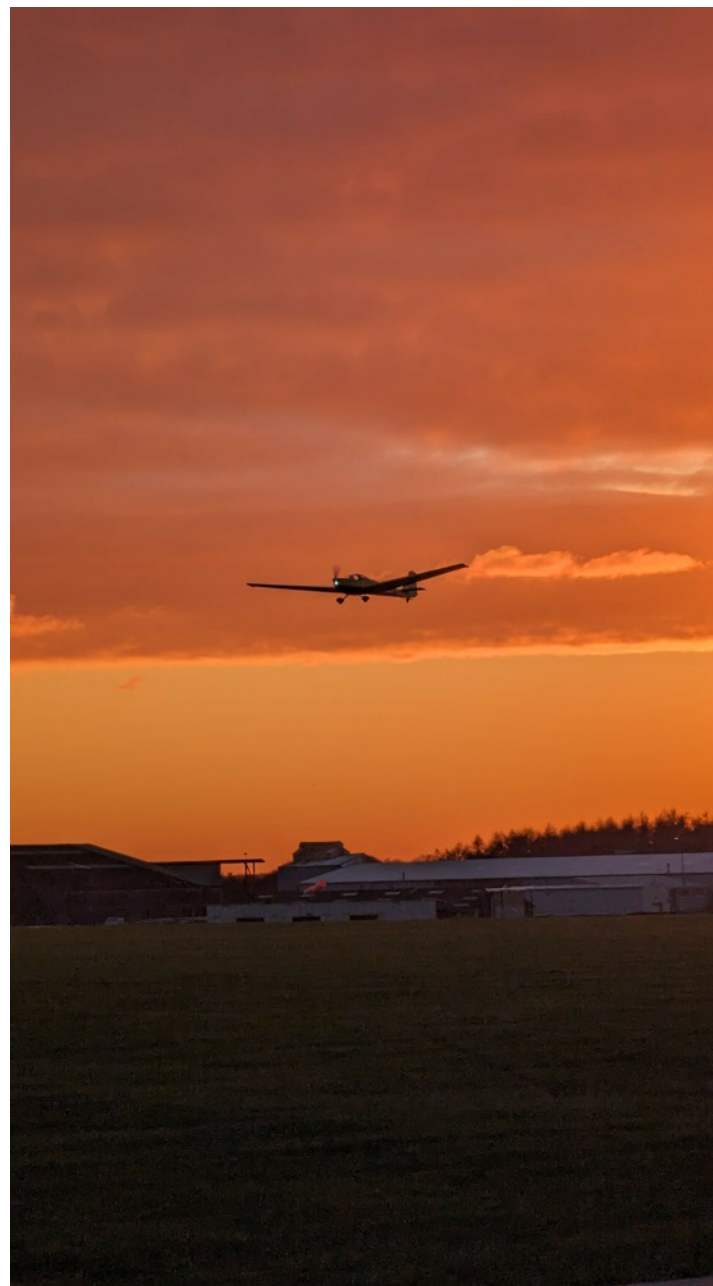
"Give what you have. To someone, it may be better than what you dare to think" ~ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The good folk of Lasham rock. It's impossible not to be impressed by how generous people are with their time, expertise and passion for flying. The enthusiasm and energy with which everyone shares their own gliding life lessons is infectious and has been a wildly positive experience. Thank you!

Viv Thackray



Roof now
on the club-
house.
Windows in
March



*Falke
landing at
sunset by
Toby
Freeland*



I have worked closely with Gavin Spink, our General Manager, ever since I was on the Committee when he was appointed. I thought I knew something of his history, but his autobiography, *There & Back Again*, was a revelation.

Starting from his beginning gliding at Sutton Bank, the book tells the story of how he progressed through Sandhurst, gaining an MSc and becoming the Army's senior combat helicopter pilot. This job is a world away from what any civilian helicopter pilot would have to do. Flying night and day close to the terrain and vegetation, sometimes in

mountainous areas while carrying out both training and actual missions, requires extraordinarily high skills that I had not comprehended before. After that there are the various types of helicopters to learn about and their weapon systems.

Gavin served in Germany, Canada, Iraq, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Africa. Some of the missions are described in great detail. Judging from these, Gavin richly deserved more medals than the many that he was awarded. During these times, he also seems to have used up more spare lives than the average cat, such as quickly recognising the need to land just before the engine seized, doing GPS

approaches in zero visibility, or arriving with only four litres of fuel. I would guess that his escapes were probably due more to great skill than he admits to.

His experiences included many sights of horrific events and injuries, often fatal, as a result of both combat and accidents. Gradually, as he witnessed more of these sights, the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) began to mount, the symptoms of which he describes in the book. Some of you will have witnessed his emotional talks at Lasham. In addition to expert counselling from the Army, these speaking events plus the writing of this book have all helped him overcome his condition.

We are privileged to have a man like Gavin at Lasham. The change from the responsibilities of a Lieutenant-Colonel to our General Manager, with few people to delegate to, must have been a culture-shock.

I can recommend this book to people who want to read about this exceptional life of a pilot in the Army. Despite Gavin being an amateur author, without a formal publisher, the book is well written. I would have liked a glossary at times, and as a self-publisher myself, I can forgive its few typos.

The book is only available from Amazon, who produce a copy whenever one is ordered. All proceeds go to Gavin's favourite charity which supports people with PTSD.

[Amazon link](#)

John McCullagh

CAA Drone Consultation

Please respond to the latest CAA consultation. The scope seems vague. No mention of safeguarding airfields. [Link here](#)

"Life... is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans..." John Lennon

I'm lying here writing on my couch thing... I really must get some paper. Not only that, but I'm sitting in the dark on my south-side plot with only three candles and this phone for light. This is all being written in Real Time. On location... Honest!

The power has just gone off as storm Isha... or whatever they're calling this one... rages outside. Which is good because its raised the temperature up a few degrees above freezing. However the kitchen sink bowl still boasts a round block of ice with my washing-up brush firmly embedded in it. The loos aren't flushing because they, too, still have ice in them. So it smells a bit. There is a reason for this... I forgot to buy antifreeze to pour in them last time I drained the water down.



I suppose I could escape home in the Volvo, except that's gone into 'limp' mode with a full soot filter. Anyway driving home in this storm at night would be riskier than staying here! Every now and then a powerful gust makes the wall behind me wobble... something there creaks... and the whole place shakes slightly. I was thinking: *hooray, at least, for gas central heating!* but then I remembered... *the gas boiler is electric too.* B*gg*r! #

Hallo... there goes the roof again... sounds nasty.

But I remain of good cheer. The installer bloke for the new propane boiler (it cost a *fortune*) put isolators under the floor (helpful chap) so I can stop the leak caused by ice cracking the shower mixer's ceramic valves.

Come to think of it that happened last year as well. It seems I need a pressure blower-thing to get *all* the water completely out of each pipe in turn but I... er... never got one of those 'round tuit' things. Never mind. The cooker, at least, is not electric.

I can just about cook potatoes with tomato soup for an ad hoc dinner-in-the-dark before the temperature drops too much. And then I can simply go to bed with all my clothes on for the next twelve hours.

The rain is incredible... and so *noisy!* I don't really think the roof is going to blow off. At least not just yet. What I *am* doing though is giving heartfelt thanks for those extra chain tie-downs I drilled into the concrete last year. And I clamped the roof of the flimsy tin shed down onto its concrete base too. So the whole shed won't blow away and crash into Martin Hollowell's immaculate palace like it nearly did last year. I'm not insured for such horrors!



There's a reason for all this. It's a fundamental problem with gliding that no-one ever talks about. (Yes... *another one!*) But I think we'd better start from first principles.

The basics

We need to work backwards. Let's say thermals get going about 10-11 o'clock in summer. So you want to be in the launch queue by about 9:45 or thereabouts... you know how it is. (*You are getting keen! Ed*) Which means you have to start rigging your own glider or DI-ing a club one by 8.30 ish... 9 at the latest.

First though, you need to park your escape module and sort your kit out. Maybe discuss a task, say, or attend the club briefing at 9.00 for the NOTAMS and weather, at the very least. Better get to the airfield by 7.30 then. And let's say the airfield is an hour away from home. Further for some people.

So we're up at 6.30. In real life, just getting out through the front door takes several attempts. You keep remembering important things... like your trousers... usually just when you've got to the car. And what about breakfast... can there be time for such frivolities?

However the most important factor we need to keep in mind is this: we need to be prepared and relaxed for flying... 'rested' and 'fresh'. We don't want to arrive at the launch point all flustered, panicked and breathless. We're saving that for a land-out. So we'd better add on another half hour at least. You see the problem? No good Christian soul should be up at such an ungodly hour as all this implies! At best it's only for those with an over-active thyroid. You know... the sort of weirdo that's up at dawn... full of beans... but poops out at 9pm... just as the evening is starting to get going. I trust you're not one of those!

The solution is obvious. *You need your own airfield hidey-hole.* They do occasionally become available... we have a waiting list of over 40 trying to get one! And there's three choices here... a touring caravan

site, two big static ones... (north and south) or a log cabin... but we don't talk about such overt grandiosity here! The cheapest private dossing facility will be a small dodgy 'touring' caravan with about fifteen previous owners.

You lease the available plot from LGS and buy whatever's on it from the departing owner. You'll need your own gas. Maybe chunky batteries too... as LGS provides no such luxury as electricity on the touring site. What they do provide is an extra bill just for the space. The static sites cost more than the membership! There's a long list of terms and conditions... you get that too.

The point is that whatever your airfield arrangement, you're entering a whole new ball game. So we'd better look at it carefully.

The change of life

It starts off well of course. When you first take possession of your airfield hidey-hole, you feel all the pride and thrill of new ownership. You buy new things enthusiastically. Kitchen appliances... utensils... crockery. It's a shock to realise you'll need a lawnmower. And a strimmer.

As your new venture is likely to be subject to encroaching brambles and you have to keep the site tidy you realise you'll need gardening tools too. Cutters... pruning shears... saws, gloves and so on. And somewhere to store them. But what the heck... *in for a penny... etc.*

Eventually you look around and notice many other things you missed when you agreed to take the place on. You decide to change the stove... and the carpet... and some faded curtains. What you *don't* do is look underneath the chassis. OK yes, you gave it a cursory glance, but you didn't *really* look. Like crawl right underneath on your back with a torch, and start poking around with a screwdriver.

When you do, you get another shock. After you've spat the rust out you add a few more things to your vast shopping list. Like a gallon

of Jenolite rust converter, a gallon of Hammerite bomb-proof paint and six wire brushes... just for starters. It's a seven week project at least. And that's just the underneath.



HIDEY-HOLE OPTION 1



HIDEY-HOLE OPTION 2

Cartoons as usual by Ross Martin

There's still the grass to mow. Brambles and undergrowth to cut back. Gas bottles to order. Batteries to charge. And we won't even think about the caravan tyres. To find them, measure the halfway point and go vertically down. Rummage around the base with heavy cutters and thick gloves. The wheels will be down there somewhere... flat as pancakes. This is especially true for old trailers! But what the heck... this thing's not going any place!

But there's worse. As the season wears on, the entropy part of the Second Law of Thermodynamics starts to make its presence felt *inside* as well as out, and you spend more and more time trying to produce order out of chaos.

My God where do we start with all this mess? Just look at the *dust* and all those dead *flies*. Where the hell did they come from? Laundry builds up. Used

socks begin to reek. There's no washing machine of course. And the grass needs cutting *again!*

At home you leave all that to the wife and the oldest kid... obviously. But here, alone in your airfield hidey-hole, it's all down to *you!* Slowly it begins to dawn on you that what you have done, in effect, is to take on a second property. All on your own. The flying season eventually ends... but hidey-hole ownership doesn't.

And then comes winter.

Seasonal variation

Now I don't know about you but winter at home for me is a cosy and straightforward battle for control of the telly. She wants to watch *Death In Paradise* while I'm trying to get Naviter demos up on YouTube in the endless crusade to remember how my sat nav works (the office computer being upstairs in the Arctic).

The important point is that at home the wife doesn't need to drain down the entire hot and cold water system every time we go out. Our loo functions without antifreeze. The ceramic valves in the shower mixer don't keep cracking.

But out on the exposed airfield no matter how much you've splashed out on your deluxe hidey-hole, you ignore these weird procedures at your peril! Even when things are going well and you're safely ensconced in your aluminium cocoon... you suddenly realise that you've cut yourself off from all the jolly craic in our happy bar. No cheesy chips for you!

Poor old Russell has no-one to cheer him up before closing and there's no-one with whom you can discuss the correct placement of wing turbulator strips or argue why elevator trim tabs can't possibly work. You know how everyone loves that one!

Anyway the bar's a 12 minute hike across sopping wet grass in the dark. Southside people will need a torch and compass. Your reverse bearing back needs to be dead accurate or you could be wandering about for ages. Oh and by the way... your milk's gone off and Abi went home hours ago.

Conclusion

You're on your own. Write out your 'to-do' list on a roll of teleprinter paper. Expect to frighten yourself. There's just so *much* to do. And so much to buy. Yes, you can put most of it off but it will bite you eventually.

However all is not lost. You have two fundamental choices:

- 1) Cut the grass (*again*), paint the outside, re-clad the water pipes, redo the mastic in the seams... try to stop the leaks and work on the rust. Do all this in the fine weather... like a normal person. Forget the flying. You won't have time for that.
- 2) Do it all in the rain. Or the fog. In the gales. Or the snow. When there's no flying.

And here's a final thought: If your expensive new lawnmower keeps clogging up with long wet grass (it will) *buy a goat*. Our club's careful and numerous regulations don't mention goats. Dogs yes... goats... no. I checked!

Strange but true... as always.

Ebenezer Grimshaw

Editors note: I think you have just halved the caravan waiting list

Lasham Gliding Society's 2024 Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 13th April 2024 in the temporary clubhouse at 5:30 pm.

Another Lasham World Champion

Belated congratulations to Tom Arscott for becoming yet another of Lasham's World Champions at Narromine last December. Also in Standard Class, Paul Fritche came thirteenth. Phil Jones was fifth in the 15 Metre Class. The team was managed by our own Werner Stroud.

Popham Airfield

Plans have been announced for a "garden village" on Popham Airfield. If you will to view the plans and make comments, go to the [Basingstoke and Deane web-site](#)

The deadline for comments is 4 March

Winter talks

The final winter talk in an excellent series organised by Debbie Scholey is on Saturday 2 March at 6pm. It is by Paul Beaver on "Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown - Our Greatest Aviator".

Editorial

A few weeks ago I started thinking that this will be the "sunset edition" of a series of publications that started in 1949 with a "Roneo-d" newsletter from the Surrey Gliding Club. I still think there is a place for something more than social media, but the future depends on you.

I would like to publish another edition on 1 July, but much depends on what everyone writes. This might be the last Lasham Magazine, under my editorship at least, but who knows?

John McCullagh

Editor

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

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Nigel Mallender
Piers-Rex Murray
Patrick Naegeli (Chairman)
Alix Pentecost

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Gavin Spink

Hon Treasurer

John McCullagh

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Sharon White

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Serena Lambre (Assistant)
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Patrick Clear (Winch driver)
Colin Currie (Facilities Manager)
Peter Bunnage (Workshop fitter)
Paul Haliday (Winch driver)
Andrew McCaulsland (Grounds/facilities)
Paul Osborne (Groundsman)

Restaurant and bar franchisees

Abi Buckland "The Flight Deck" Restaurant
07850 166393

Jaison Beeson "51 Degrees North" Bar
07585-954578

Other roles

Dave Hopgood (Tugmaster)
Henry Freeborn (Safety Officer)
Colin Watt (Child Protection Officer)

Sub-committee chairmen

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.

Lasham Gliding Society Ltd

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Back numbers

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