LASHAM

June 2017

Rising Air Magazine

Aerobatics

Appalachian ridge flight

Is planking it genetic?

Radio fun

Photo: Paul Haliday

Intro.
For the last couple of years, the weather in June has allowed me some spare time to write an magazine article, and at the beginning of the month I thought this would be repeated. Unusually the Jetstream only stayed for a week or so and we are now into a very good run of cross-country weather. Let us hope that the summer has finally arrived.

European Gliding Championships. The planning for this competition started over two years ago, and at the initial stage it was made clear to the FAI that Lasham intended to continue its club operations while the competition was in progress.

As a result, a set of operating protocols were agreed and then tested and refined over the last two Nationals. It has worked well and most members have been surprised that a comp has had little impact on their flying.

The operating procedure for the European Championships will follow the same procedure as last year with a couple of small additions. As a reminder, I have listed them below.

1) The competition runs for almost three weeks, with the first few days being set aside as unofficial practice days. During this time, we will still be operating as normal with club operations from the main runway. The first official practice day is Thursday the 10 August, and from that date we will stop winching operations during the daytime.

2) We will adopt the split operating procedure with the competition using the main runway and the entire south-side of the airfield. The club aerotow launching will take place from the north-side grass. **All club flying circuits will be on the north side and should be started from the normal height.**

3) Due to the winch being out of action during the day we will be offering reduced price aerotows. 1500ft for £10. Limited to a max of three per day.

4) When the competition starts launching we will suspend club launching, and it will not commence until the competition director and the CFI agree that there is no safety risk with the number of gliders in the local area.

5) Any form of racing finish is expressly forbidden.

6) Any club pilot launching on a cross-country flight is expected to start their task as soon as possible and not loiter in the local area.

7) Club tasks will be set at the 09:30 cross country briefing. These will be different from the competition tasks to ensure the safety of the competition pilots, and more importantly the sporting fairness of the comp. Under no circumstanced should a club pilot try to fly the competition task as this may result in the British team members being disqualified, and it will certainly result in the member being banned from flying at Lasham until the end of the season.

The morning briefings will cover all the airfield operating procedures for the day, so if possible please try to attend these.

Airspace clarification.
At the morning, cross-country briefing we show all the relevant NOTAMS for the day, and often a member will ask about the timing of certain events such as small air displays or parachuting.

It has become clear, when discussing the relevant airspace on the day with pilots, that many people do not fully understand the classification of temporary airspace and also what they can and cannot enter. The three main ones ate CAS(t), RA(t) and parachute zones

CAS(t) is the temporary airspace that that is normally put in place when a royal flight is arriving or departing from an airport that does not have its own airspace in place to protect the flight. The CAS(t) airspace is normally

Class D airspace, so you can contact the relevant controlling ATC unit and they may allow you to enter. They will also be able to tell you if the airspace is active as it often gets closed once the flight has arrived or departed.

RA(t) This is temporary airspace that's put in place to protect some airshows, large gatherings, and also the Red Arrows displays. They don't generally have any ATC controlling the airspace, and for most there is no access for gliders and GA traffic.

If you infringe a RA(t) then there will be consequences that could range from a warning letter to a prosecution in the courts. When I have talked to other senior GA pilots, it seems clear that the CAA have hardened their position on airspace infringements in the last few years.

Parachute Zones There are a number of parachuting sites in the south of England. Most will be active weekends and a few that are commercial operations will be open seven days a week. The first thing to remember is that there is generally no airspace associated with the Drop Zone. On the navigation chart there is a 1.5nm circle around the site which is simply a warning to pilots that parachutes could be in this area.

Still from a parachutist's video

Following the collision between a glider and a freefall parachutist fifteen years ago the BGA agreed a code of conduct for glider pilots when in the vicinity of a drop zone. The most important point is that if you cannot make radio contact with the DZ then you should not enter. The CAA have also reinforced this point to GA pilots and a few years ago prosecuted a power pilot who came close to some parachutist.

If you intend to give the parachute DZ a call then it is important that you ask the right question. If you ask about the status of the zone, then they will probably tell you that its active and to stay clear. The better question to ask is the status of the drop plane, or are there any parachutes in the air. This will allow you to build a picture of what is going on, so you can decide if it is safe to cross. They should be in contact with the drop plane and will give regular notifications on their frequency when parachutes are about to exit the aircraft.

Odiham helicopter operations

Our near neighbours at Odiham have been operating Chinook helicopters since the early 1980s, and for most of us they are almost invisible, apart from the noise they make when they go underneath you.

A few years ago we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Odiham with the aim of informing each other about the nature of their operation. One of the things that we discovered is that they have an IFR hold that is just to the North West of Lasham. The holding pattern starts at 3000ft QNH and is active up to 5000ft. Although this is an instrument procedure they will sometimes be using it for training in VMC. There will be one pilot who is head down flying the aircraft and a second one looking out.

They also fly an instrument approach on their runway 09 which brings the helicopter along the southern edge of Basingstoke at around the same height as gliders on final glide into Lasham. There should also be one pilot looking out during this procedure, but if they have a technical issue then all four eyes could be inside the cockpit, so do not assume you have been seen.

Cover photo
Many thanks for the photo of one of our K21s by the prolific Paul Haliday

General member information

1 Waypoint database

Every year the BGA review all the waypoints in the UK, and then add ones that are requested by clubs, or remove any that are no longer relevant. Lasham Finish West has been removed, and LAS in now 500metres to the North and renamed Lasham Start North.

2 Flarm update

The manufactures of Flarm have announced that from the start of 2017 their devices will now have to be updated every 12 months. if you have found that when flying there have been no returns on your Flarm when flying close to other gliders, then it is probably because one or other glider is not running that latest firmware.

3 2EE jet movements and the strobe.

The phoenix that that rose out of the ashes of ATC Lasham has been ramping up its operation over that last 12 months, and now there are generally three to five jet movements per week. I thought it would be worth reminding members about the basic operating procedures we have in place when there is a jet movement. Once the fire trucks come out and the fire officer arrives at the launch-point we have ten minutes to clear the runway. At this point the fire officer will inspect the runway and ask for the strobe to be switched on. This lets people know that 2EE have taken control of the runway, and no one should cross it. Once the jet has either landed or departed then the fire officer will check the runway before switching off the strobe. **At this point, please do not go on to the runway before the strobe light is switched off.**

4 Towing a club glider without someone on the nose

On several occasions, recently we have witnessed people towing club glider behind a Gator without someone walking by the nose. It is when the glider reaches the tarmac area that the glider easily catches the towing vehicle, and on one occasion if it was not for the quick thinking of a junior member it would have run into a private glider. **It is not acceptable to tow a club glider without somone on the nose.**

5 Glider parking.

In the last few weeks we have had a run of blustery weather, and I have had to constantly remind pilots about the need to park K13s with the into wind wing down and plenty of tyres securing it. K13s fly very well by themselves in blustery conditions as was proved a few years ago by glider "M". Please be vigilant!

6 Airspace alerts via email subscription

You can now subscribe to the CAA's Skywise notification service and receive selected info on airspace restrictions via email or text **https://www.caa.co.uk/Our-work/CAA-SkyWise/**

Aboyne 2017.

This year's Aboyne expedition will be running from Sunday 24 September to Friday 13 October. Its a great place to get your diamond height, try some wave cross-countries and extend the soaring season. The expedition list will be open at the Lasham office on Saturday 8 July at 08:30

Colin Watt

Chief Flying Instructor

Human-powered flight

The annual competition of The British Human Powered Flying Club will be again at Lasham, the site of the first human-powered flight, during the early mornings between 15 - 23 July.

http://www.bhpfc.org.uk/index.html

Lasham will be the host for the 19th European Gliding Championships (EGC) 10-26 August 2017. The competition organising team, Lasham management and the Golden Glider catering team are all keen for the supporting social events to demonstrate what a great place Lasham is during this period.

Mark Davenport has agreed to coordinate this programme of events, which will mainly take place in a big fully-fitted marquee that will be positioned on the grass area between the car park and the volleyball area. It is not anticipated that there will be any charge for these events apart from the purchase of food and drinks. The exception will be the party night on the 25th. However, we are planning to sell tickets for this event to non-competitors for only about £15/head. We would really like as many club members as possible to enjoy what is on offer.

Sat 12 August (from early evening): EGC Opening ceremony. There will be a flying display (which is NOT open to the public), parade, brief opening speeches followed by a hog roast and reception with live music from a jazz quartet. Come and support Team UK. The opening will start at about 18:10.

Sun 13 August: A 'British Evening' with suitably themed catering and 'pub-singalong' entertainer. Come and champion the British spirit!

Tues 15 August (evening): A Beerfest event featuring a selection of beers (and possibly cider and other drinks) with more suitably themed catering plus live music featuring a party band plus a set from Lasham's 'star' saxophone professional Ken Barker. Drink, dance and be happy...

Fri 18 August (From late afternoon): A cheese and wine evening. A more subtle and tasteful event! Local produce and a selection of wines available to taste and purchase. Debate the virtues of your favourite tipple and guilty pleasure with our European guests.

Wed 23 August (Evening): Open-Mic Music Night. For the last few years this has proved a popular event during Comps weeks. **WE NEED YOU** to come and perform. It could be just one song or up to 3 songs/performances with some of your mates. If we get enough interest from the European contingent we could have our own Eurovision?!!

We will consider almost any type of performance and NOW is the time to think about it, get practicing and book your slot (I will be putting together the acts via mark.davenport175@gmail.com - contact me asap)

Fri 25 August: Party Night. This year we will be trying to emulate the success of the great Lasham Hangar parties! We will therefore be staging a 1950's themed party featuring a full 20-piece swing band, themed cocktails, photographer and lots more plus buffet-style catering (probably BBQ/hog roast based). Although this will be run as part of the end of competition celebrations, we anticipate a reasonable number of tickets to be available to members to enjoy this event.

Sat 26 August: Closing Ceremony (Times and details TBC) Please contact Mark Davenport with any questions, queries and maybe offers of other entertainers you know who may want to participate on mark.davenport175@gmail.com or +44 7721 397211.

Very many thanks,

Gavin Spink

General Manager

PS At last year's event the club flying continued very successfully. This year there will be the same arrangements ie a club grid & cheap aerotows.

Enjoyable ridge flight

Although Tony Firmin now spends most of his time in Canada, he is still a member of Lasham Gliding Society. This is a story of a flight along one of his usual stomping grounds in the eastern USA.

April – May is a good time for ridge running in the Eastern US. Perhaps the most famous starting location is Ridge Soaring Gliderport at the foot of the Bald Eagle ridge, near State College, Pa.

This ridge is the farthest west of a series of ridges and stretches 800km from Williamsport to near Knoxville. The top section, below which Ridge Soaring sits, runs almost uninterrupted for 150Km from Williamsport to Altoona.

The ridge generally works well when the wind blows from the NW so pilots from all over the eastern US watch for the forecast winds and assemble for the fun.

So it was on Sunday 14 May I arrived with my Discus2CT hoping for a good ridge flight the following day. Because this section of the ridge curves at both ends it is often the case that you can reach one end in ridge lift but not the other, unless you find a thermal.

I started around 11am, long after the keen pilots had started. As I flew north the wind speed was registering 17kts and appeared to be right on the ridge – perfect! On past Howard Dam then Lochaven where Piper aircraft were built and on to Williamsport where I had to speak nicely to the tower as I entered their Class D airspace.

So far, so good, now to test the ridge at Altoona. On average, I was doing about 80kts and was flying between 2500 – 3000' AMSL which is about 500-1000' above the ridge. By this time the wind had picked up to 25kts and together with gusts from thermals being triggered from the ridge provided an occasional head-banging experience. The straps were as tight as I could get them, what was of more concern were the loose objects which from time to time floated up.

I had finished the first 300km by 2pm, so what to do, might as well go on for 500km but then I had done that by about 3pm so might as well keep going. Back to Williamsport and a second pass over Altoona The total distance with which I was credited in the 5½ hr flight was 680Km all without needing a thermal.
So this was ridge running at its best and an enjoyable change from the typical thermal flights I do elsewhere.

This year has also been a slow start for us, last May was very good but this year has been very wet. We don't get a lot of thunderstorms in a typical year but in the last week we have had a continuous series of fronts associated with lows around James Bay, with resulting extreme convection.

Try downloading the Google Earth file from Dropbox. (*Ed: I adjusted the tilt angle in Tools/Options/Touring to 78 degrees before pressing play.)*
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/z82k3t7i05n3e7t/AACu8ASEFHQWjg9Lmdrx8w0Pa?dl=0

It might prove entertaining for some, as it is quite realistic. You can speed it up, or stop and take a look around.

Tony Firmin

Aerobatics

Bruce Cooper is organising the Sunday evening aerobatics. If you are willing to drive the winch, tow plane, instruct, judge aeros or want to have instruction please email Bruce at **bruce.cooper68@icloud.com** and he will match pupils with instructors.

This year we would like to put a bit of emphasis on having pilots fly sequences and have them critiqued from the ground so that Lasham can make a good showing at the two Saltby competitions.

Photo of an LGS K21 by Paul Haliday

Lasham is again hosting a *"Get into Aeros"* event on the weekend of 16 -17 September. It will give an introduction to aerobatics for juniors, 26 yrs and under. No solo or aerobatic experience necessary. Each student can take two 4000' aerotows for £40. There will be talks and a BBQ. Visitors from other clubs are welcome and camping will be free of charge. The aim is to improve handling skills and make pilots safer and wiser. Last year there were 25 students, five aerobatic instructors and five aerobatic gliders. In the event the weather was not great but somehow everyone got their flights. Contact Paul Conran **paul@paulconran.com** or keep an eye on the British Aerobatics website. **www.aerobatics.org.uk**

British Junior Team

The British Junior Team are preparing to compete at the tenth FAI Junior World Gliding Championships later this summer. The 'Junior Worlds' take place every other year and see the best under-26 pilots from across the globe battling it out to become either Club- or Standard-Class junior world champion.

From Lasham Tom Arscott is competing in his Std Cirrus 'GW'. He is the current Junior World Club Class Champion, having won the last Junior Worlds in Australia in 2016 and is looking forward to the opportunity to defend his title at Pociunai Lithuania from 23 July. The non-flying team captain is Shaun Lapworth who is also a member of Lasham.

Tom Arscott

As soon as the team was announced in October 2016, the pilots arranged several meetings over the winter to start the preparations such as arranging crews, training weeks, practice competitions, funding and logistics for the season.

Before the Comp each of the team will have had three weeks of training and coaching along with two weeks of competition flying each before the JWGC. They have also made weekend and evening visits to multiple gliding clubs to train where possible and also assist in fundraising for the Worlds.

Instruments and radios have been upgraded control surfaces have been sealed, Cs of G optimised and bug wipers installed. As part of their preparation the Lasham Workshop lent the team our weighing equipment.

Some of the team were able to spend a weekend in April with Andy Davis at Nympsfield. Over Easter the Juniors joined join members of the British Senior and Women's teams at Lasham for four days of training and coaching. Since then they have had another training weekend at Gransden Lodge in May. Some have also competed at Hahnweide. Further training happened at Issoudon in France and at Gransden. Watch the results at

http://www.jwgc2017.lt

The Piggott Interviews - 5
DP on gliders

The Gliding Heritage Centre sent Paul Haliday, Geoff Martin & Mike Philpott to interview Derek Piggott lin 2015 to start a video archive. This is the fifth section taken from the transcript. Last time we learnt what happened when Wally Kahn appeared. This time Derek talks about gliders.

I don't really have a favourite glider, but I did like the little Russian glider Fedorov Me7 Mechta now called Aviastroitel AC-4 Russia.

It has a span of 12.6 metres. Although it used modern materials, it was really a home-build, which eventually was produced in small numbers. It was lovely to fly, surprisingly good performance and a huge cockpit. Some of the Russians were quite big and so I was no longer cramped up in a corner of a fuselage.

There were some gliders that I really did not like. One horror that I flew in the States was the American Eaglet. It was designed by Larry Haig and first flown in 1975. It was the only time when flying a glider I continued with a tow because I was too scared to release. It was a little home-build with a straight wing, quite high aspect ratio with about 15 metres span. It had an inverted V tail so on the ground you were resting on the tip of the tails to keep the wings level with little wheels at the bottom. The fuselage was just a boom and then there was a pod for the pilot

AmEagle American Eaglet

It had spoilers instead of ailerons. To roll, you pulled the stick over and a little flap came up in the middle of the wing to reduce the lift and so puts the wing down At the same time the other flap is held flat in and then when you want to roll the other way, this flap comes up and it reduces the lift and increases the drag. Twelve were built.

I just like to fly as many types as possible. I waited a year to fly a French glider that Frank Irving had said was a rogue and terrible. I looked round the outside of it, but I couldn't see anything wrong with it,. However when I got in it, the cockpit was horrible with misplaced controls and an awkward lever in the wrong place. When it came to flying, it had very poor handling. The Grunau Baby is another difficult glider. In particular, the co-ordination of the rudder and ailerons is awful.

If I had to design the perfect glider for training, it would have side-by-side seating for the very early stages. It is much easier on the nerves of the pupil if you are side-by-side.

Of course it should have good handling. You should also be able to stall it, at least, at almost all positions of the centre of gravity and then be able and make it flick into a half a turn of a spin. it is important is to recognise what is happening when that happens quickly to you. The glider has to stall fully from level flight with a gradual movement of the stick back. You then hope there is going to be one or other wing drop, but you can make it happen by just a little rudder and then it should drop a wing down violently. That is the important bit of it because it is a big surprise that when you do it accidentally. If you have not recognised what was going on, you will kill yourself.

To help recognition of this so the pupil is not unprepared, I might say "can you put your feet on the rudder? I will then stall it, and you should make the recovery." You might do one or two straight stalls, and then I provoke the incipient spin. I determine the dropping of the wing with the tiniest bit of rudder, so they don't recognise it. It is supposed to be uncomfortable, scary and unexpected. You have to get familiar with it, so that it is not a surprise when you do it accidentally.

Eventually learning about formal spin-recovery is important in case the incipient spin progresses, or for all sorts of reasons such as having ice on the wings, damage, getting the centre of gravity wrong or leaving the tail-dolly on.

The K21 is not the ideal trainer because it will spin only with the CG well aft. If you brought the C of G right to the limit, you would probably get to find you would get full spins, though maybe only two or three turns at most. K21s will not continue spinning, because the elevator isn't powerful enough and the CofG is never far enough back to give the elevator enough aft control to keep the wings stalled.

Although I recommend doing full spins, what matters is spin prevention. Moving the stick forward will stop a spin as soon as it unstalls the wing. It then cannot spin. The forward movement should be progressive, as far as you have to, to stop the spin developing

It is sad there is no British manufacturer. I did a lot of work at Slingsby's They did very well when they had wooden gliders. They were sold all over the world, but as soon as they moved off wood, things started going wrong. They needed to get down the cost of the man-hours, but they also needed really skilled workmen. The all-metal T.53 trainer was one of the their last gasps. Unfortunately, the RAF's order for 40 was cancelled following evaluation and the disruption caused when the Slingsby factory was destroyed by fire in 1968. It was later produced as the YS53.

The Yorkshire Sailplanes YS 53 owned by the Gliding Heritage Centre

Fred Slingsby died in 1973. He was a super bloke, though he could be difficult, but he had his head screwed on the right way.

Afterwards they diverted from things they were familiar with in the wood. However there was more to changing from wood to metal than Slingsby's realised. They had expected to be able to just design and produce a new glider just like that.

A *German Glasflügel Kestrel which Slingsby's built under licence.*

It turned out there was an awful lot of know-how involved in making lightweight, metal aircraft. They needed to cut down their man-hours but when you use metal initially, your learning curve is pretty horrible and it takes time to even get people to produce anything. With the thin metal skins, you get all sorts of buckling problems with the riveting and so Slingsby's were feeling their way all the time.

Fibre-glass was also coming in at that time and so they also built the Kestrel and the Vega. Like metal, you have to know the material pretty well before you trust your life on it, so it was another learning curve.

I quite liked the Kestrel, it was a good German glider, for its day, though it has a complicated cockpit with two systems of flaps. As well as the flaps, it also has air-brakes and a tail parachute. Because the performance was higher, they had trouble getting the landing speeds down or getting the drag up for landing for steeper approaches. Even with flaps and small air-brakes, they needed more drag, so they tried a tail parachute. This was a simple solution but it was no good. You just get one go after you opened it.

The Vega had a different type of flap than the Kestrel. There was a big argument about this. After Fred's death they kept changing the boss of Slingsby's, and I think that was partly the problem. Their designer was George Burton, who wanted this special flap arrangement but it was hard to do. They wasted a lot of time and they would have been better without it.

I think that there is still further to go in the design of gliders, but it gets very expensive if you get involved in pumping air through the skins to change the flow. There could be a big change when you get boundary layer control but I cannot imagine it being on everyday gliders. If they get too complicated, there is not much point, except in competition.

Instead performances will get better with minor mods. I still think we can expect quite an improvement, especially at high speed, but I don't think that would be true of low speed performance. I think we are doomed to have things going faster and faster in thermals.

As well as laminar flow, there is quite a lot of performance that could be gained by improving wing-loads and things of that sort. I would think the wing-fuselage junction offers a big jump for researchers but it might be difficult to construct the thing to make it efficient.

Edited by John McCullagh

Catch up day

Derek Piggott and his partner, Maria Boyd, at the Catch-Up Day

The latest Catch Up Day at Lasham was on 10 June. I contacted around 50 members (past and present) who have shown interest in the idea. Every month we meet on the second Saturday of each month - March to November inclusive. On average 10 - 12 people turn up each time though not always the same people, which makes it more interesting.

This time we had 22 attendees - including Derek Piggott, Maria Boyd, Pat Garnett, Nigel Stevenson, John & Marion Delafield, Dennis & Margaret Johnson, Tony & Liz Segal etc We celebrated the day in style with Pimms, nibbles and a 'birthday cake' to mark the second anniversary of these days. Most of the gathering adjourned to the restaurant afterwards for lunch. A good time was had by all. Derek was in incredible form (surrounded by people from the moment he arrived) and I think he really enjoyed himself. What a fantastic man at 94, Hugo Trotter was also there of the same age! Sadly David Ince was not well enough to join us.

Marjorie Hobby

The Foka 4 took to the air again on the 6 April, previously last flown in June 2000 at Sutton Bank, so that is pretty well 17 years stuck on terra firma. Fitting that its pilot for the first flight at Lasham should be Gary Pullen, as Gary led and did a great deal of the work in what turned out to be a two year major restoration.

Foka 4

This is the highest performance glider owned by the GHC and of course is an absolute classic. It has a 15m span and so it is Standard Class. The Foka 4 is the only Standard Class glider ever to win the World Opens – at South Cerney in 1965. It is already proving very popular with GHC members, so if you want what is a truly iconic glider in your logbook join the GHC!

Events

Besides the hangar tours, the GHC also supports a number of local events. Participation at these is organised by a sub-committee run by Hilton Thatcher. The current list for 2017 is as follows:

- Hannington country fair took place on Sunday 25 June and went well
- Blackbushe 75th anniversary, Saturday and Sunday 1 & 2 July
- Medstead fete, Saturday 8 July
- Alton classic car event, Saturday 23 September
- Possibly the Brooklands open day, though whether this will happen depends on their completion of building work currently in progress. Probably Saturday 14 October if it goes ahead

A significant purpose of being at these events is to support the local community, but it's also about promoting Lasham as well as the GHC.

Second GHC hangar

Preparatory groundwork is well under way for the much needed second hangar which will be sited to the south of the current hangar and have the same dimensions, namely 30 metres by 30 metres. Project management is in the capable hands of Gary Pullen and Richard Moyse.

A lot of manual voluntary work, much of it in the initial stages, will be needed to keep the costs down, though at least we will be doing it in the summer this time and not the winter as was the case with the first hangar. (Brrrr!, as I recall!) A bit early to speculate on the completion date as to-date we are only two thirds of the way to meeting the estimated funds target needed.

Once completed we will be able to house more vintage gliders, have them better spaced, and likely better arranged for hangar tours – eg having all the Slingsby gliders together.


Saturday 3 June and an excellent gliding day. However, not for Gary Pullen who spent all day moving earth at the second hangar site.

Glyn Bradney

About the Gliding Heritage Centre

Many members of Lasham Gliding Society are also members of a separate organisation, The Gliding Heritage Centre, in the green Chris Wills Memorial Hangar on the south east corner of the airfield.

35 gliders are beautifully presented and displayed and available for viewing, particularly in the season when the hangar is usually open and GHC members are around. Why not pop over and take a look around. We do regular tours every Sunday meeting in the club house at 2.00pm and custom tours for groups any time by prior arrangement with the office and GHC. The tour can be just stand-alone or even better be part of a team-building 'corporate' day out, taking advantage of LGS's Air Experience programme, its great restaurant, simulator and other facilities.

GHC's Steinadler

A mission in preserving our gliding heritage is to fly these beautiful machines. If you are a member of LGS and of GHC (£24 pa), you too can fly.

We have several two-seaters, so we can cater for all levels of pilots qualifications and experience. The LGS Office will find a member of GHC to brief you on exact requirements. We aim to fly on the first Sunday of the month, but flying can and does happen most days with good weather.

Another part of our mission is education. This obviously includes history and heritage, but also extends to evolution of aircraft design, aerodynamics, many artisan skills and much more. It is great for all levels with aviation interest but particularly for youngsters to spark their interest. School groups are welcome. If you are involved with teaching youngsters, please ask at the LGS office. If you would like to learn some skills, you are very welcome as we can never have too much help with our many renovation projects on gliders and trailers. As Glyn reports on the previous page, the second hangar is very close, so building skills and muscle would be much appreciated.

We need a broad cross-section of skills and enthusiasm for our visits to external events. We usually take our simulator, usually one or two gliders and our stand. Talk to Hilton Thatcher for more information and how to get involved. You can register as a friend to get more details on the events and monthly updates on GHC at **http://www.glidingheritage.org.uk/friends/fm-contact-us.cgi** or send an email to Alan Baker **alanb@flyglide109.com** to be put on our monthly comms list.

There will be a task week 27 August - 3 September. It is a week of tasks with an emphasis on fun and open to any vintage glider as well as the GHC's . You can even fly different gliders every day and beer for the scorer can enhance your winning chances. Contact Pete Bunnage for more details.
peter.bunnage@icloud.com

So in summary GHC would love to see you at the GHC and please be encouraged to get involved. It is a great extension to the activities at Lasham Airfield. You will have a great gliding experience, gain knowledge and make some great friends.

Our social night is every Thursday evening in the Lasham Vintage Gliding Club's hut. For more details have a chat with Paul Haliday.
paul@flightbox.net

Alan Baker
07771 624727

The Second GHC Hangar
An appeal for funds

As many of you will know ground clearing is well under way on the site for the second GHC hangar. This involves a substantial amount of work led by Gary Pullen and Richard Moyse - the costs associated with this particular task are relatively low. Once the ground works are completed we move on to actually constructing the hangar and this is where we start paying out a large amount of cash!

This second hangar will be exactly the same size as the first, 30 metres by 30 metres. Our estimate is that it will cost just over £150k. Our plan is to split the project into two stages.

- **STAGE 1:** The outer shell is completed but without any doors, plus the floor will not be concreted. This gives us a building that will have an immediate practical use yet means we don't have to raise the full £150k before proceeding.
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- **STAGE 2:** Complete the hangar – doors, concrete floor, electrics, etc. Estimated that this will cost a further £30k, but first things first, the immediate aim is to proceed with Stage 1.

Image of second hangar courtesy of Paul Haliday and Ken Summers

Our estimate is that Stage 1 is going to cost just short of £120k. Note that a long standing GHC policy is to maintain a minimum bank balance of £10k to cover unexpected costs/purposes. Looking at our current bank balance and taking away this £10k reserve we are about **£15k** short of the £120k target. This takes into account two substantial pledges that have been made.

Before signing the contract for the Stage 1 shell of the hangar we need to be financially secure. This means we need to raise another **£15k** to reach our target – this includes 5% for contingency.

CAN YOU HELP? Every contribution towards our goal is most gratefully received!

For details of how to donate to our Second Hangar Appeal please visit the Donations Page on the GHC website:
http://www.glidingheritage.org.uk/donate.htm

We all need to change our radios to the new 8.33 kHz specification. Our first decision was whether to buy a cheap hand-held device and fit it into the cockpit with a separate (hand-held) mike or go the whole hog and replace the panel-mounted radio with a new one.

It duly arrived, wrapped in a cosy duvet of bubble wrap, with little bits of important-looking paper, a mini-disk, and a Zip-loc bag containing a bundle of rainbow-coloured wires attached to a multi-pin plug and a London Underground map of how to connect the wires.

The mini-disk turned out to contain a PDF of installation and operating instructions written mainly in English, but with a few important passages in Deutschlish. 61 pages in all.

After several readings, most of it began to make some sort of sense. And we discovered that our existing speaker might not be compatible with the new radio. Chat with another member over a cup of tea revealed that he had just installed a new radio and got an error message when he switched on telling him that his speaker was grounded.

We took this to mean in the electrical sense rather than banned from flying. This was exactly what our installation instructions warned against: "*Special intention has to be paid off at gliders after retrofitting on older installations. Check with a meter the resistance between one of the speaker wire and the case of KRT-2, it should be a high impedance. After turn on it will appear this warning on the screen in case the speaker is grounded:* **WARNING Speaker grounded**."

As we didn't know how old 'older installations' were, but given that our trusty, but weighty glider was made in 1976, we thought it best to fit a new speaker as well. Next decision – where to fit the new radio. The old one slid into a rectangular slot at the bottom of the panel (just behind the stick, with the on-off switch right by the cable release knob). The new radio, on the other hand, was designed to fit into a standard 57 mm circular cut-out.

As it happens, our glider has had an extra, non-functional vario ever since we've had it. A previous owner had either not got round to connecting its wires to anything, or had disconnected the wires because it didn't work (the ends of wires were neatly wrapped up in insulating tape), but hadn't got round to removing it.

Luckily, it was fitted into a 57 mm cut-out in the centre of the panel – simple to remove. The big rectangular hole at the bottom of the panel could easily be blanked off.

Diagnosis and planning was now near completion. Next task – find and label all the existing wires behind the panel and under the seat. Removing the cowl over the instrument panel was simple – four little spring-loaded screws with knobs that you have to push in and turn through 90°.

The seat was next. It was fairly easy to undo the four fasteners, but a challenge to manoeuvre the thing past straps, side pockets, microphone, wheel-brake handle on the stick, etc. without losing fingers (mine or syndicate partner's).

This done, we still could not see enough of the innards to get adequate access to all the wires. So we took the side panel off. The top two screws were easy as they screwed into threaded holes in the frame. The bottom two were more of a problem because they screwed into nuts on the inside of the frame. These nuts were almost unreachable by adult human hand. However, not having a child to hand, and after considerable contortion we undid these AND, miracle of miracles, did not lose the nuts or washers.

Now we had sufficient access to remove the cage that the old radio slid into. This gave us room to see all the wires and we found that they were all nicely labelled already. We added a few duplicate labels along the way just in case. We could now merrily start snipping away at these wires ready for the transplant.

While we were at it, we undid the little panel that carried all the switches and fuses – this was unnecessary and a mistake, as it turned out. Carefully

following the tube map, we began soldering the new wiring loom into the old wires. We had chosen to do this out in the open, by our trailer, so needed to use a butane-powered, cordless soldering iron. Nice bit of kit, but it blasts out very hot exhaust gasses just where your (or syndicate partner's) fingers need to be to hold the two wires in place. Job eventually done and partner still had all his fingers (though somewhat scorched, as much by his attempt to pick up the soldering iron by the wrong end as by my shaky hands or the exhaust jet of the iron).

The radio was screwed into the panel, the antenna lead was connected and the multi-pin plug was plugged in. Now all that was need was to put everything back together. Uh, Uh! What's this loose wire doing? It was clearly from the vario and had become detached from its rightful place on the switch panel. Discussion time. 'I'm sure it was attached there.' OK, let's solder it back.

All was done and we switched on. Nothing worked. Out comes the multi-meter. The battery was OK and power was reaching the switch panel. But no further. We checked all the fuses. One had blown and it is a simple job to replace it. We switched on again only to find the same fuse had blown.

I had been on my knees for about five hours by now and somehow this had disturbed the usually moderately effective functioning of my brain. We decided we had had enough after blowing four fuses. So we went home.

Next day it was still dry and sunny, so I returned, genuflected by the side of the White Wonder and tried again. The fuse blew again, so we decided try some logic. (*Ed: Albert Einstein said that a sign of madness was to do the same thing again and expect a different result.*)

We looked at the connections to the new wiring loom. All seemed OK. We looked at the connections to the fuses. A dim light was beginning to burn in my brain. If the same fuse kept blowing, it probably meant it was being exposed to the full force of the battery voltage with nothing to impede its flow (I did A-level Physics in 1961, so I know a thing or two about electricity).

A second dim bulb started to glow. What had we done recently that could have led to the problem? Why, we had re-attached one of the vario leads to the switch panel. Doh!! A quick inspection showed that I had soldered the vario wire to the wrong terminal and no current was going to the vario – it was all going to the fuse. No wonder it kept blowing.

I removed the errant wire and soldered it where it should have been, replaced the fuse (again). Crossed my fingers and switched on. Hooray! A loud, clear conversation came through the speaker, with too many complex aviation-related terms and abbreviations for it to be anything else. After a few minutes reading the instruction manual, I found how to change the frequency to 131.025 and, lo and behold, there it was: "Whisky Sierra, take up slack…all out, all out!"

After fitting a blanking plate for the gaping hole left by the old radio, all that was left was to tidy up the wiring with some cable ties, refit the side panel, the seat and the cowl. Once the seat was fitted, I stood up (as straight as my knees would allow) to admire our handiwork. It looked good. But a second look revealed that the airbrake handle had disappeared. The seat out came again (fingers bruised but intact), the air-brake handle was retrieved, and the seat was refitted. Hooray.

But hold, on. Where are the lap belts? The seat came out again, the belts fed through the slots, the airbrake handle was carefully held in place, while the seat was re-fitted, and fingers were counted. The job was done.

Oh, no. Where was the cable release knob? The seat came out yet again, seat belts were carefully fed back through their slots, the air-brake handle was held in its right place with one hand, the cable release knob was held in place with the other hand, while the seat was wrangled back into place with my other two hands (my syndicate partner was at home earning brownie points). I stood up again. At last it was all done. Everything was working. There was just the paperwork to do, but that is another story –perhaps. Must try to fly soon.

EMU

PS Those of a certain age will remember *Radio Fun* as a weekly comic filled with comic strips about characters on the wireless.

Royal Aero Club Awards 2017

The Royal Aero Club is the co-ordinating body for all airsports in the UK. At its annual awards event, Lasham were well represented.

A Certificate of Merit was awarded by the Royal Aero Club to The Gliding Heritage Centre. Pictured L-R Tony Newbery, Julian Ben-David, Gary Pullen and Squadron Leader A.P.Millikin of The Royal Aero Club .

The Cowburn Old & Bold Trophy was awarded to Roy Cross (ex-chairman of Lasham, who owns shares in RF4, Ninbus 3, Stemme & an HPH Shark)

A Bronze Medal for a significant contribution to glider aerobatics.was awarded to Charles Baker. Pictured here with his wife Margaret. Charles is a committee member of the British Aerobatic Association and its company secretary.

Howard Torode is the BGA's Technical Officer. He was awarded an RAeC Silver Medal.

Winning, nature or nurture; is planking it genetic?
By Al Nunn

As I sit here contemplating where the 80s, then the 90s, and then the noughties went, including my flared jeans, the question of why I have never won a nationals continues to haunt me, but is probably not a puzzle to many others!

I have been flying comps since the early 1990s, and despite doing a fair few hours each year and slowly clawing my way up to owning a competitive glider, I seem to have reached my peak, with my national's rating hovering around the 30-50 mark.

I have managed to win a few Regionals, but once into the big boys (and girls) league, I am, well, simply outclassed. The top bods seem to make better second by second decisions, both on the good days, but especially on the more difficult days, and I usually suffer the ignominy of coming home to the depressing sight of their gliders already tucked up in their pyjamas, and the owners relaxing by their caravans drinking tea with the BBQ already on the go.

Now where I am going wrong? Do I simply have no talent, or is there a large dollop of being born in the wrong circumstances? Is my plank index (an inverse metric to the Nationals' rating) dictated more by nature or more by nurture? Can I blame my parents?

This is of course a question that has puzzled humankind for millennia, and in scientific terms, has seen huge budgets for large scale genome association studies. These have looked at how mutations in genes affect a particular characteristic, such as weight, or IQ, and in particular, the propensity to develop disease. Now while it is clear that genes are important, for instance, they might explain some of the difference between say, Trump and a tangerine, it is turning out that your phenotype (your physical and mental characteristics) is very heavily influenced by the environment; at the current time, research suggests that only about 20% of our IQ is determined by genes.

The discovery of epigenetics, which literally means above genes, has confirmed this; there is a whole layer of re-programming of your genes that happens during your lifetime that it dictated by the environment. It can even be passed on down to your children. So what *you* do in your lifetime not only affects you at a molecular level, but how your kids might turn out; it gets imprinted on our genes.

What all this basically means is that our systems are far more plastic than many people thought. The classic example of this is that millions have been spent trying to identify the gene (s) for "fatness"; while there are certainly alleles (effectively variations of a gene) that lead to a small predisposition to becoming blobby, the reality is most people get fat because they eat too much and don't exercise.

They have found some genes for fatness, but many don't modulate your metabolism; they seem to control your IQ. I will leave you to work out which way the correlation goes (I will give you a clue; there was a correlation between BMI, or body mass index, and the propensity to vote one way or another in the Brexit referendum).

Classical genetics will tell you that a "trait" (such as height or IQ) of a population will follow a normal distribution (or Bell curve). For example, 68% will cluster fairly closely around the average, but there will be 2% "outliers" and beyond at either end displaying an extreme. So in terms of IQ (yes, I know, it is a bit contentious, but keep with it), something like 68% of us will have a value between 85-115, while 2% will be brainy nerds with an IQ above 130, and unfortunately, there will 2% with an IQ of less than 70 (for fear of libel, I won't say who they are).

This has led, for a long time, to the notion that you are born not made. So if someone did well in a sport or business, everyone assumed it was down to their genetics. Ok, there is certainly an element of truth in this. For example, the type of muscle you are born with (slow twitch versus fast twitch), the shape of your skeleton, or your eyesight; if you are only 5ft 1 inch tall and extremely short-sighted with a club foot, then it unlikely you will play in a major basket-ball league, but you might still be really good at something else.

But the psychology of this can be devastating – it simply means many people just give up. However, evidence is now turning the table; it is becoming clear that many people, within reason, have far more potential than they realise. For example, combining physical exercise with mentally demanding tasks induces the brain to grow and make more connections – we can make

ourselves smarter, faster, and more coordinated even into older age. But of course the reverse is true; if we don't use it, we lose it. This adaptive process is called 'hormesis', and is key in evolution – without the ability to adapt, life would not have got very far. Its roots can be found in pure maths relating to how order can arise out of chaos due to perturbation.

In effect, we exist because stress induces molecules to organise; one of the key elements is the incorporation of information that provides a selective advantage under natural selection. In simple terms, practicing something that challenges us makes us better at it.

So back to Al Nunn, the so-so mediocre Nationals pilot; can he ever become national champ? I, of course, have been asking myself this for years as I use the last thermal of the day provided by my competitor's BBQ to get around the last control point (thinking of the last day of Euroglide – and no, I didn't make it).

My family knows all about this, and they always ply me with books on winning in gliding, ranging from Brigliadori to Reichmann, as well as sports performance books, including one by Malcom Gladwell, and this year, they got me a book called "Bounce, the myth of talent and the power of practice" by Matthew Syed. They have also wanted to supply me with my own noose after I have planked yet another day. Anyway, that aside, there is something in this practice lark, especially if you start to incorporate the science. You have probably heard of the 10,000 hour rule about mastery. And that got me thinking.

A very wise and senior BGA coach once said to me that if wanted to get good enough to get into the British team, I would need to be doing about 150 hours plus a year of relevant flying. And there is the first clue, lots of hours of the right kind of flying. Syed's book suggests that successful people often accrue huge amounts of relevant practice at a young age – when compared to their less successful colleagues. Other things that fall out when studying these people: they have the right opportunities and support to do this practice, and they are also highly motivated. People then look at them and go, "gosh, they are just so talented". And in that phrase they do themselves in. In turns out that "raw talent" may have less of a role that previously thought.

Ok, so let us look at my gliding history: solo in 1983, bronze 1984, silver 1986, instructor by 1987, full cat by 1989, gold 1990, diamonds 1994 and 750 badge, 2006. It took me 12 years to go from doing a 500 to a 750; I had had several attempts, but I was just *too* slow to begin with.

What about comps? Well, I entered my first Regionals in, I think 1989, and nearly came last; on one day I think I came fifth, which I thought was terrific, until I realised that I had been so slow that I had missed the shower that brought all the leaders down in a field. I bought my first share in a glider in 1990 (a third share in a Jantar 1 that was based at another club, don't ask). I started flying regionals fairly regularly, and entered the odd nationals, but never really did that well, and got terribly depressed.

Looking back, during the 1990s, and the early noughties, I did, however, do a great deal of instructing, ran a group, became a tuggie and went on the committee (never again!). I was doing about 5,000 km cross-country and 80-120 hours per year. In the noughties I then started flying the Club Class Nationals, as well as a Regionals and the Open Class (in different gliders; they would not let me enter the Nimbus 3 in the club class, unfair, really – I promised to fly it empty). In the process started doing less teaching and administration, and more cross-country flying.

And guess what, not only did my nationals rating start to improve, but I managed to win a few Regionals, and not embarrass myself too much in the Nationals (moving from the bottom third to the top third). At this point I had a third share in two gliders, a Nimbus 3 and an LS6, and had all but given up teaching, and was regularly flying 10,000km and 120-140 hours a year, mostly cross country. I had a total of about 3,000 hours in gliders.

Today I fly a JS1, and have managed to consistently finish in the top ten of the Opens (ironically, much better than I ever did the Nimbus), but have had variable luck in the 18 Metre Class (ranging from 6th to 23rd over the last years). Alas, I have never got close to winning.

The main reason, I think, is that these comps are generally flown by most of the British team – in particular, the 18 Metre. And as we know, they are probably the best in the world at the moment – and have been for many years. So what is their secret, is it pure talent and general awesomeness?

Money? Good looks? Or just masses of the right kind of practice and huge dedication?

So let's have a look at me. Today I have a total of about 4,000 hours – accrued over 36 years; so nowhere near 10,000 hours! The next thing is that for the first ten years of my gliding career I spent a great deal of time instructing, and I missed the boat with regards flying in the juniors (too old) – this was largely down to my career choice (I did a PhD, and never had any money, so teaching was really the only way to get one's bum in the air).

I then made a very slow start in the competition scene, and was not flying a great deal of kilometres – a lot of this was due to having a low access to a glider, and competing interests (I used to run a high-maintenance classic car, which always broke down, and had little money. Of course, then there were the women). This all changed when I left main stream science and started working in industry (regular hours, more dosh, and not living in London, and I met the right women), so my whole situation changed, enabling me to come flying more often.

By this time I was in my late 30s. By my mid-forties, I started to take cross-country more seriously, reduced my instructing load and put in a lot more time of the right kind of practice. Critically, I started to learn how to fly faster and always tried to fly with water (a top tip from Andy Davies), and was able to appreciate how others went so quick; importantly I also started to mingle more with the serious competition folk. So that explained why I suddenly improved; I did a lot more of the right type of flying and moved into the "competition" set. Ok, what about the team guys.

The first thing to notice about the current British team is that most of them have been in the team either consistently, or on and off, for many, many years. Most of them started when they were young, and some of them were born into gliding families. They have also flown an immense number of competitions, both here and abroad – often from a young age. They are therefore highly motivated and very competitive, and have probably engineered their careers in such a way to support their gliding. Some of them do coach, but many don't seem to have been active instructors for any length of time. I don't know how many cross country hours they have, but for some of them it must be well in excess of 5,000 hours – probably more.

Thus there are several important factors here, but the most obvious is that they have done a lot of the right kind of practice, are clearly motivated, some certainly had the right social support, and once they got into the team, they got "boot-strapped" up to a higher level of training (in effect, they moved into a highly supportive structure). In short, they did a lot of the right type of practice, and in most cases, when they were young. One of the most important findings of successful sportsmen and women is that once they get to a certain level, the correct kind of coaching can have a massive impact on their future success.

Hence, if we compare my flying career with that of similarly aged team members, the most obvious difference is very likely to be that I did not really get into the competition scene until my mid- to late-thirties. By this time, most of these guys (and gals) were already in the team, or close to it, and had probably covered two to three times the right kind of cross country kilometres compared to me.

They were then in the right coaching environment. I have never, ever been coached in cross country flying; like many, I was, once I had my shiny bronze, entirely self-taught (badly, I suspect; I can only blame my alter ego – "Let's have a beer instead Nunn"). A long, slow process, as getting it wrong generally put you in a field and that ended the day's practice. It is clear to me that the in today's gliding world, there is probably a better system to encourage and support younger folk. How do I know? They are thrashing the pants off me! Sigh.

So, what can we take from this? The first and foremost is that to get to the top level in gliding does require the right circumstances, ambition, and masses of the right type of practice. It does suggest that although there is probably some genetic predisposition, which has probably has a lot to do with good hand-eye coordination, depth perception and intelligence, and particularly, genuine interest. The majority of the skill comes from a lot of the right kind of practice and environment. This kind of supports the idea that it is much more about practice than innate talent.

If I had to make a guess, I suspect the mix is about 10% talent, 20% being in the right support group, 30% motivation and 40% of the right kind of practice. Which of course leads us onto a rather interesting question – at what age does one's current performance start to become undermined by

the ageing process? Is there an age, to be frank, where we are simply too old and wobbly to boot-strap ourselves up to team level?

Gliding does require money, and generally speaking, the older one gets, the more disposable income one might have to buy a more competitive glider. This of course has to be balanced with a family and the kind of job one has. The only class where this is less applicable is the club class, which as long as you have the time, is why it is so popular. Hence, it is heavily, but not exclusively, populated by younger pilots (although there are a few older ones; G Dale is perhaps the most inspirational pilot in this category).

However, the average age of the British senior Team is probably somewhere in their fifties, which in many ways is terribly encouraging for us older folk, as it suggests many who take up the sport can, if they get their practice right, keep improving well into middle age. The British team won the team prize at the Worlds, and many of their competitors were probably a lot younger. Thus, what it actually takes to get near the top is motivation, the right support, and a lot of practice, rather than raw talent, so it is probably a lot more about nurture than nature.

My advice, if you want to win? Get up there and practice in the right way, and mix it with like-minded individuals. In particular, chose your parents well. Failing that, my top tip is always fly heavy when practicing, and go and fly on the more difficult days, and perhaps most importantly, enter competitions – but then don't fly too heavy (trust me, I have fallen for the macho practice of flying heavy just to impress the girls and psyche out the competitors – it does not work).

The science behind flying a little heavy to practice, but then flying in a competition at the right weight is fairly straight forward; it is pretty similar to athletics training. Those of you who do fly with water will know how it feels when you dump it – you may have to fly slower in a straight line, but everything becomes a lot easier and, and climb so much better!

Flying hormesis I call it. What does not land you out makes you stronger. But that is a discussion for another day. As for me, and I suspect, many others, our National's rating is probably directly correlated with how competitive we are, and how much commitment we are prepared to apply.

One has to balance the commitment and sacrifices that have to be made to win with everything else in life: the real ticket here is to enjoy it, and the key here is to be as good as you can be for the amount of commitment that life allows you to have – and accept that your National's rating will reflect that.

It is my experience that most pilots who compete do accept this, and while they may grumble when they do not win, they continue to enter comps because they enjoy the flying and accept they do not work as hard at it as the top folk. Those that *truly* want to win will make the change in their lives to accommodate the dedication required.

Thus, I think, planking it is probably not as genetic as most people think, and winning probably does have a very large dollop of nurture – and is, perhaps, down to how we assign our life priorities. No right or wrong, just different, and maybe, it is down to what we perceive as being truly important.

With regards the author, well, I have begun to accept that my love of science and fast cars, as well as my family life and interest in Tai chi, has focused me in a slightly different direction from trying to become world gliding champ. The truth is that my National's rating does reflect the amount and type of flying I do, and I am happy with that!

Al Nunn

Editor asked Al if there any simple rules that could be passed on to novice XC pilots. He replied: "Alas, if it were only that simple; much is in those books I mentioned, but I think the real answer is less about how fast you fly, although that can come into it, but in where you place the glider. The more efficiently you can use the energy in a long glide, the faster you will go. If you talk to Andy Davies, he never really flies much about 90kt in the UK. He can read the sky really brilliantly, and so can work out energy lines really well, even in blue and/or difficult conditions. The penalty for being too heavy, and going too fast vastly outweighs being slightly light and flying slightly too slowly. You will not win every day if you are slightly too cautious, but you will certainly lose by pushing too hard – believe me, I have learnt the hard way. In my experience, when flying with people, is that they simply are either under-confident or not experienced enough in their sky/ground reading. That is where the practice comes in; the more skies you fly in, the better you get at reading the conditions."

The season so far

Date	Pilot (p1&p2)	Glider	Task	Km	Km/h
25-Apr	Aveling & Coppin	Arcus	LAS - Weymouth - Telford NW - Firle Beacon - LAS	729.6	91.3
25-Apr	David Masson	LS6 W	LAS - Kidderminster - Cerne Abbas - Bullington - Eastbourne NW - LAS	643.1	86.8
25-Apr	Roy Pentecost	ASG 29 (18.0)	LAS - Weymouth - Telford E - Firle Beacon - LAS	707.1	97.8
18-Apr	David Masson	LS6 W	CandoverCh-LewesNW-Treyford-Bridgnorth-Cerne Abbas- Candover Ch	639	86.4
25-Apr	Nigel Mallender	LS8	LAS - Kidderminster - Cerne Abbas - Eastbourne NW - LAS	627.7	84.3
18-Apr	Roy Pentecost	ASG 29 (18.0)	LAS - Gainsborough - Mottisfont - Husbands Bosworth - LAS	811.8	95.7
25-Apr	Alistair Nunn	JS1 B	LAS - Kidderminster - Cerne Abbas - Bullington - Eastbourne NW - LAS	643.1	100.2
18-Apr	Patrick Naegeli	ASG 29 (18.0)	LAS - Gainsborough - Mottisfont - Husbands Bosworth - LAS	811.8	93.1
18-Apr	Alistair Nunn	JS1 B	CandoverCh-LewesNW-Treyford-Bridgnorth-Cerne Abbas- Candover Ch	639	98.1
18-Apr	Saunders & Abbott	DG 1000 (20.0)	LAS - Eastbourne NW - Pewsey - Corby - Crewkerne - LAS	760.5	73.4
19-Apr	Aveling & Kindell	ARCUS	LA3 - Lewis N - Okehampton - Didcot - LA3	621.7	94.9
18-Apr	Billy Brady	ASG 29 (18.0)	LAS - Lewis N - Mottisfont - Gainsborough Pwr Stn - LAS	690.6	82
19-Apr	Garry Coppin	ASG 29 (18.0)	LAS - Lewis N - Okehampton - Didcot - LAS	620.7	95.2
18-Apr	Roger Barber	NIMBUS 4	Micheldever Stn-near Eastboune-near Biddulph-near Exeter-Micheldver	788.1	77.8
25-Apr	Roger Barber	NIMBUS 4	Candover Ch - Eastbourne NW - Shobden E-Polgate-Chichester - *LA6	750.5	94.8
18-Apr	Olly Metcalfe	DISCUS 2	LA2 - Lewis N - Newbury RC - Ravensthorpe Reservoir - Yeovil - LAS	602.9	76.5
18-Apr	Aveling & Coppin	ARCUS	LA3 - Eastbourne NW - Butser - Tenterden - Whitchurch (Salop - LA3	843.7	88.5
03-Jun	Christopher Starkey	ASG 29 (18.0)	LAS - Salisbury South Scunthorpe North- LAS	618.1	89.9
19-Apr	Alistair Nunn	JS1 B	LAS - Tiverton - Basingstoke N - Crewkerne - LAS	606.7	113.9
25-Apr	McAndrew &'Jeff'	DUO DISCUS XL	LA3 - Great Malvern - Cerne Abbas - Devil's Dyke - LAS	509	84.4

The thermal season started very slowly. By the end of March only two flights had appeared on the Ladder from Lasham. Even up to a late Easter there had only been one or two good days, but then an Arctic stream blew in, killing half the British wine harvest. The Tuesday and Wednesday after Easter (18 & 19 April) consequently had exceptional flying conditions causing 65 postings on the BGA Ladder from Lasham

The good weather intermittently continued for another week and then stopped. Consequently, if you looked at the table above you would think the season stopped early. I have never seen such a limited distribution of dates for the best flights. In the top 40 only eight were not in April. Even then it wasn't easy. The epic flights on 25 April required a lot of shower dodging as well as being very cold.

However it was actually better than that in May and June eg Andy Aveling has clocked 4,850km so far April to June, including seven flights over 500km. It is good to see new names on this list even if the dates are all the same!

Best flights are as at 21 June 2017

You will all be familiar with the expression that if it looks like a duck, waddles like a duck and quacks like a duck …….. then it probably is a DUCK!

Well, if it is lightweight and small like a K8, has light and crisp controls like a K8, and is quirky with characterful fun like a K8, then it is probably a K8 …….. or possibly even a Druine D.31 Turbulent.

The original D.3 version of this diminutive open cockpit single-seat powered aeroplane was created in the late 1940's by a young Frenchman, Roger Druine, who designed and built his first aeroplane at the age of seventeen.

He was employed as a draughtsman by the large Sud-Aviation aircraft company, formed in 1956 by the merger of many smaller companies such as Bloch, Potez and Liore at Olivier. His tiny Turbulent became increasingly popular with the home-building fraternity, not only in France but in the UK, where the Turbulent was one of the first PFA (Popular Flying Association) types home-built in any great numbers.

It was easy to build, due to its simple construction techniques, small size and easily available engine – the ubiquitous Volkswagen, a plentiful supply of which were left behind by the retreating German army in Europe. The VW was initially 1200cc, 34hp, and the Turbulent, with its 21ft 7in wingspan, weighed in at only 350lb empty.

Its handling qualities were considered by many experienced pilots to be quite remarkable. The controls were crisp and very light making it an absolute delight to fly. It was recognised very early how glider pilots would take to this machine very quickly – it has the feel of a Schleicher K8 or K6 glider.

If the aircraft had been designed today it would undoubtedly be in the microlight category but in the 1950s it was simply placed in the ordinary 'Group A' category, now SE Piston (land). Operated on Permits to Fly rather than a Certificate of Airworthiness, all surviving Turbulents are an EASA Annex II aircraft.

Roger Druine went on to design two other popular types: the D.5 Turbi, which was a scaled-up tandem two-seater version of the Turbulent, powered by a Continental A-65 or Walter engine; and the D.6 Condor, a licence-built version of which became very popular in the early seventies as a trainer with many UK flying clubs. Lasham Gliding Society operated one as a glider tug for several years.

In 1957, under the control of Norman Jones, Rollason Aircraft and Engines Ltd. began constructing the first of a series of licence-built D.31 Turbulents at Croydon Airport. The company, set up in the thirties, was famous for refurbishing hundreds of ex-military DH82A Tiger Moths for civilian use after WWII, and for importing into the UK French types such as Jodels, SV-4 Stampes and Wassmers.

Sadly, Roger Druine was never destined to see the popularity of his aircraft designs for, shortly after visiting the production line at Croydon in 1958, he died of leukaemia at the tragically early age of 37.

The first Turbulent off the production line at Croydon was G-APBZ, flown on its maiden flight by Norman Jones at Redhill on New Year's Day 1958. After a thoroughly high-spirited test flight, in which he demonstrated the Turbulent's ease of flying and great manoeuvrability, he was apparently summoned to the Control Tower and admonished for "dangerous flying"!

Between 1957 and 1969 the company produced 29 of the breed, including three improved versions known as the D.31A, with a strengthened mainspar, a higher AUW and a more powerful VW engine. These three aircraft were

Turbulents, Tiger Moths and glider pilots (continued)

capable of gaining a full C of A, unlike the D.31 which could only operate on a Permit to Fly.

The first example of this version built, G-ARLZ, and the second, G-AWPA, were both registered to Norman Jones on behalf of the Tiger Club in September 1966 and January 1969 respectively. The third and last one built, G-AWPB, was registered to the comedian Dick Emery, a long-standing Tiger Club member, in April 1969.

A good proportion of the Rollason Turbulents went straight to the Tiger Club, which has been home for at least eighteen of them. The oldest Rollason-built Turbulent remaining on the UK register today is G-APIZ, the second aircraft built and first flown in 1958, which belongs to Richard Meredith of the Tiger Club Turbulent Team. The youngest remaining example is G-ASMM, first registered unsold to Rollason on 31 October 1963 and then finally to Bee-Bee Flying Limited on 6 July 1965. As well as being built by Rollason in the UK, the type was also factory-built in West Germany by Stark Flugzeugbau, which completed 36, many surviving to this day. Aircraft were built at the then-closed Croydon Airport and assembled and test flown from Redhill Aerodrome.

Rollason also built under licence the proven Ardem 4CO2 conversion of the VW engine for use in the Turbulents, which in its 1200cc standard form produced 34hp at 3000 rpm, but was later uprated in the Mk.10 version to 1600cc, 45hp. This is the version most commonly in use today, both with the Tiger Club Turbulent Team and private owners.

Norman Jones obviously had quite an amicable arrangement with the ARB (Air Registration Board) in those days, as he managed to reserve registrations for most of the Rollason-built Turbulents that for some reason ended with the letter Z.

The Tiger Club was probably created at an Air Racing Dinner at the Royal Aero Club, London, on 24 January 1956, when Norman Jones instigated the idea of a club to race refurbished Tiger Moths, of which he had plenty at the time. Here began the special relationship between the Tiger Club and Rollason, Norman going on to provide aircraft for the Tiger Club over many years - Tiger Moths, the Stampe SV-4, Condors, Jodels and the diminutive Turbulent.

The Club quickly found "the Turb" to be an ideal aircraft for precision formation flying and the Turbulent Team was formed in 1959 when it flew its first display at Fairoaks Aerodrome, Surrey. According to Tiger Club lore, the tenor of the Turb Team was set way back in 1961, when a nine-strong team displayed on the public days at the Farnborough Air Show. "Do you come to Farnborough often?" one of the team members was asked by a show-goer. "Only during the formating season" came the reply!

Various "barn-storming" activities were quickly added to the Team's repertoire, notably tied-together formation, limbo, flour bombing and balloon bursting and today's team continue to fly these at airshows and private events such as fetes and weddings. We are extremely proud that the Turbulent Team remains the oldest display team in the world and 2017 promises to be as busy a season as ever. We will be the headline act of the opening ceremony of the 19th FAI European Gliding Championships at Lasham on the evening of 12 August 2017.

Team pilots come from a variety of backgrounds but are all highly experienced. Within the current line-up of seven pilots, four fly gliders extensively while the remaining three have all done some gliding at one time or another. As the Turbulent is only modestly endowed in the power department, a display pilot needs well-developed handling skills and a good appreciation of energy management which means that glider pilots are extremely well qualified to fly it. The aircraft's relatively low power can make it a challenge to display in a way that's both dynamic and exciting but still safe - especially at low level. Many of today's powered aircraft pilots would describe the Turbulent as being "twitchy" but to us the controls are just light, crisp and well-harmonised!

Tied together

If you possess a valid PPL, or NPPL, and would like to fly a Turbulent then come along to the Tiger Club at Damyns Hall, Essex, where you will be made most welcome. Traditionally, it was mandatory that every new member had to successfully complete a thorough checkout on the DH82A Tiger Moth before being allowed to fly other Club aircraft.

The "Tiger" is a great screening tool as it is not easy to fly well - which is why it became such a classic training aircraft in both civilian and military use. However this requirement has been relaxed somewhat and a member may be allowed to fly the Turbulent provided they can demonstrate a high level of competence on the Cub, usually followed by a single flight in the CAP 10 whose merits include an unfamiliar environment, light controls and a very similar take-off and landing attitude to the Turbulent.

Of course time on the Tiger Moth would still be considered to be a considerable plus when making these necessary judgements. The Tiger Club operates both G-ACDC, the third example ever built, first registered to the Hatfield School of Flying on 6th February 1933, and our "youngster" G-ASKP which was built in 1935. Our contact details are;

The Tiger Club 1990 Ltd
Damyns Hall Aerodrome
Aveley Road
UPMINSTER
RM14 2TN
Telephone: 01708 524633 Club Manager: Glyn Richards

The Tiger Club webpage:**www.tigerclub.co.uk**
The Turbulent Team webpage: **www.turbteam.com**

Three excellent hyperlinks of the Turbulent Team in action are available on YouTube;
https://youtu.be/5rYo5vOVKL4 Preseason Flying Training at Damyns Hall Aerodrome
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RvvLDzjW60 Dunsfold Wings & Wheels August 2016
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qnan6Woz8O4 Dunsfold Wings & Wheels August 2014

Jon Bastin

We have been fairly busy behind the scenes with the Lasham Trusts. Many will know that last year, we divided the old Lasham Trust into two.

We now have the Lasham Trust (LT) and the Lasham Charitable Trust (LCT). It is confusing that we have two very similar names, but we wanted to keep the association close and the Lasham Charitable Trust's name describes what it does quite nicely. We did this because we saw that there were some very valuable tax advantages in having charitable status. However not all of the LT's activities and expenditure could qualify for the benefits of charitable status. We did not want to inhibit the LT's activities, so we split off its work that could qualify for charitable status and so now have the LT and LCT. The Lasham Trust continues to provide various items that enhance the Lasham experience for members and visitors alike. The Lasham Charitable Trust is helping to provide access to gliding for those who would not otherwise be able to reap the benefits of participating in our wonderful sport.

In the last year or so the LT has received a very generous single contribution from a senior member as well money from the collection jars, member subscriptions and collections at the winter talks and events. From this, it financed tools and equipment for the Members Maintenance Facility, the new children's playground equipment, which is just being installed as I write and money towards Lasham's Youth group. We also provided a new weather station for Dave Masson's forecasts. The cabrio top for K13 "B" was also financed by LT. It only be fitted to "B" because some mods to the fuselage were needed. It has been popular with members and we reckon that it has probably improved utilisation of that particular K13.

The Lasham Charitable Trust has also had some income from collections and has received a substantial legacy from Wally Kahn's estate. We have put this to good use by launching the Wally Kahn Scholarships. We identified that among the many bursaries and grants, there appears to be a shortfall in getting pilots from Bronze Badge level towards their Silver "C" qualifications. This leads on to many more opportunities in gliding.

The Wally Kahn scholarships are intended to help people who would not have the means to achieve this qualification from within their own resources. Merv will be doing the coaching this year. We intend to run the courses alongside the European Gliding Championships at Lasham in August. We feel that the Lasham Charitable Trust will provide personal development for people whom cannot get access to the opportunities that gliding brings.

So, where are we now? How can you help? As ever, the Trusts always need funding. There are some very valuable tax advantages to helping fund the Lasham Charitable Trust. We are not tax experts and cannot offer individual advice but members might wish to consider leaving provision for the LCT in their wills as well as contributions right now, which can also be gift aided. We hope that publicity raised through the Wally Kahn scholarships will lead to further income. The LT funding continues and again, we are always grateful for individual contributions.

Lasham, our club is the best in the world, and the Lasham Trusts help to make it even better. We are always open to suggestions and ideas on how we might enhance the Lasham experience even more for members and visitors alike. If you have any great ideas on how we can do this, please do get in touch.

Dear Post Initio,
One of the many many things they never told you about modern gliding was that gliders tend to look the same. They are all very similar in shape and they are all white. Which is pretty boring… quite apart from the fact that it makes them hard to see against the British murk. So why is this?
Well you're up against three unavoidable problems:

1). The first is a tendency for all inventions to slowly approach a Design Optimum. It isn't just gliders… airliners too… and even cars… all tend to look the same these days. This is because after many decades of trial and, in some cases, (like the F104) error, we are now approaching the Best Way To Do Things. With gliders this means narrow cockpits with nowhere to put your sandwiches and expensive long thin wings that don't fit in the garage… not even after you've cleared it all out.

2). Fibreglass. This makes the best, smoothest and most accurate shapes for things like wings… and er… well… most bits of the aeroplane really. The only trouble with it is that it's expensive to repair and heavy. But there's a worse snag: if you paint the top surface any colour other than white it can start to melt in a really *really* hot sun. Of course that is never a problem in Britain because the sun very rarely gets anywhere near that sort of crazy temperature. If it did, it would be a simple matter to stick a thermometer on the wing and maybe just head for the pool on the one day in a million when there was a very faint risk of your glider turning into Plasticene in a tight turn.

3) Europe. Unfortunately in the grey goo of European legislation such an approach is unthinkable. A pampered deskbound Eurobureau crat is incapable of understanding that 97% of all gliders stay in the countries where they are registered and the idea of having any kind of sensible flexible local rules depending on where you fly is abhorrent to them. In Europe everything has to be exactly the same. Thus wing surface finishes for a Scandinavian winter have to be exactly the same ones as for summer in the Moroccan desert and the fact that you can no longer see your white aircraft on the snowy ground… never mind the sky… cuts no ice with them.

But should you find all this unhelpful uniformity a tad depressing there is, fortunately, a way to step sideways in gliding and lift the spirits… *you can go Vintage!* This is highly recommended.

In the sober hours of daylight the Vintage Club is the place to rebuild and finish that 'project' glider that you bought so recklessly from gliderpilot.net for a mere snip and now sits half in and half out of your garage. The VGC workshop is always busy and the more hands-on and mucked-in you are the better they like it. Don't worry about not knowing much about old gliders. As at LGS, the place abounds with experts of all kinds and they will put you right. Anyway they're just large models really. The gliders I mean... not the members…

That 'Project' glider you bought so recklessly….

Joining the Vintage Glider Club will take you back to the days when gliding clubs were full of colour and hands-on derring-do. Colourful men and women did colourful things in colourful aircraft that had colourful handling… often using colourful language. The cosy smoky Vintage Glider Club hut, festooned with model planes, a huge stove, and dusty old photos is a world away from the slick corporateness of the LGS clubhouse. The VGC is a great way to expand your whole concept of flying gliders and you can join and fly vintage machines for less than the cost of a single maxed-out cross-country flight in an LGS-owned club craft. Because VGC aircraft are made of wood and canvas it doesn't really matter how brightly you paint them… and it's fun to discover

all the peculiarities our ancestors experienced when they flew them in the pre and post-war eras.

The Steinadler, for instance, doesn't respond to ailerons on take-off and astonishingly has to be thermalled with controls completely crossed much of the time. Your leg is always in the way… but what a machine! The Olympia 2b, despite being almost as old as me is quite the opposite, having nicely harmonised controls… but you do have to *wear* the canopy like a diver wears a helmet! The Slingsby Skylarks paved the way for modern machines and they handle even better with rock steady turns but have a trim that has to be constantly adjusted for every knot of airspeed change. The open cockpit machines are always popular… the Prefect is a firm favourite and the old T21 workhorse trainer still gets flown regularly. It's no good looking at the lift-drag figures of all these machines and the appalling penetration of some… *vintage gliders are all about character*… not performance. Despite its primitive stabling the clumpy T21 still hangs in the air with a majesty that no other glider has. All these machines positively leap off the ground as if eager to get airborne and they land and flare with a nice slow whisper.

The only snag is that the club members themselves are not noted for their majesty or flair for whispering. They are a lively and disparate bunch to put it mildly. Don't be fooled by all the grey hair.

Arrive in the Vintage hut for a Thursday evening dinner and you will find, to your horror, that on your first visit you have to make a short speech. You are not allowed to use the word 'fibreglass' and not allowed to use a mobile phone. If you do, you will be fined and have to put money in a wooden box. In fact diners can get fined for almost anything… I have seen several unfortunates fined for simply wearing a 'loud' shirt after mealtimes when the contributions failed to match food costs. Bottles are carried. G is liable to knock seven bells out an old out-of-tune piano. Wives and girlfriends are welcome and no-one worries which is which.

Practically speaking, at Lasham the Vintage Glider Club is inseparable from the Gliding Heritage Centre where many of the strange old aerial beasts are stored. But competition for hangar space is fierce over there and they like to keep at least half a dozen or so machines flyable in any year. You can join both the VGC and the Heritage Centre merely as an interested party, but if you can fly to an Intermediate standard you ought really to buy your own machine. It won't cost that much. A syndicate ownership will typically set you back less than a thousand pounds and your own 1960s machine about £3000-£4500. Nowhere in Britain could you fly so well with so much variety and so much help for less cost.

Another quiet Thursday dinner down at the vintage hut..

In Germany there is reputed to be a gliding club every 10-20 miles or so whereas in Britain we have a steam railway every 10-20 miles instead. But we do like aeroplanes… and we like old machines. Imagine the amazement you could cause by landing your creaking 1950s Kirby Cadet on some country estate cabbage patch. Imagine the respect you would get by completing the Ultimate Challenge in gliding. No… not flying the new Ventus 3 from here to Timbuctoo… any millionaire could manage that. I mean flying an old SG38 type primary. It isn't the fact that there's not a shred of canopy… it's the fact that there's not even a shred of cockpit! … just you… two straps, a stick, a rudder bar… and a wooden plank.

I mean that's flying! Women will throw themselves at your feet… probably… or you might get sectioned. But one thing you will not get… Bored!

Ebenezer Grimshaw

Martyn Oliver came on a course at Lasham and volunteered to write up his experiences for this magazine

A bit of background first: during a mis-spent youth I grew up around gliding and flying with the ATC, which still leads me to append "sir" or "ma'am" to anything said to instructors. I am trying to de-program it.

I was very fortunate that my Dad was involved with flying T21s and later Vikings with the ATC for pretty much ever, with the traditional RAF moustache to go with it. On the civilian side, he part owned a few vintage ships which we took to the international rally once a year on the continent. You could often blag some rides in some fairly rare kit (including a two-seat primary) and in the evening there was always an Eastern European contingent who brought some amazing liquorice vodka.

However, I consider my time as a glider pilot only really started in June last year. A couple of friends were at Lasham for the day and they called me to ask if I want to join in. I soon remembered how much I enjoyed it, and the next week at work was looking up the next available week's course. So for all the money this has already cost and will cost in the next few years, is entirely the fault of my friends. I have spoken to a lawyer and understand I can sue them for around 30% of the expenses.

Back in the office I found a week that worked, so I told my boss that I needed some time off and inevitably got to discussing why. So I told him. Having never heard of gliding before, he sat there stunned for a few minutes before coming back with predictable responses - "Is it safe?". "You mean like hang gliding off a cliff?" and "No for real, what do you actually want to do?"). His concern was less of a "It's a real pain to hire new people", and more of a "Well, we invented the engine, isn't this unnecessary?". After a brief explanation that his logic could also apply to his cycling, and at least I would not have to wear Lycra, I managed to get the time off.

After pitching up on Day One and sorting the paperwork out, we all had a quick chat with the course instructors for that week (Jordan Bridge and Mike Birch). We then started hauling the kit out.

Soon enough I was in the front seat of a K13. Preflights done, and Mike shouted that he was going to fly this and for me to follow through. It soon turned out I cannot coordinate my hands and feet anymore. I felt that it could be a long week. However, thankfully, some great instruction and my brain kicked into gear. I remembered how to use different limbs at the same time, and so managed to get a grip of the controls.

The week went pretty well, helped by perfect weather. Even though one morning started with overcast and a lower cloud-base, there was not much of a queue and it was a good time to practice cable-breaks. (Hint: If you are going to practice cable-breaks, clean out the floor of the glider first, otherwise you end up wearing some dead grass after lowering the nose.)

By Thursday, after landing and walking the glider back, Mike asked me if I wanted to do one by myself. And so on a very still Thursday evening on June, I was able to get my first solo done. Even though it was a short flight, I learnt a lot - ranging from how much quicker the aircraft rotates with only one person in it, differences in performance when the glider is lighter, and most importantly, making sure you have a pee before jumping in.

Glider safely returned with a landing that was probably in a different postcode but then there was pint in the bar before heading home. On the next day I managed to do two more solos. The day's valuable lesson was that if you go go off somewhere else, you will find then find better lift but everyone will come over and join you again; a little like aeronautical hide and seek.

My first proper solo soaring happened in September, when I managed a shade over an hour and a half in a K13. It seemed that I could always contact lift after a winch launch but if I took a 3000 foot aerotow, I would be back on the ground in fifteen minutes. The first time that you soar by yourself is a great feeling. It proves that you do it without an instructor telling you how. There were further soaring flights until the English weather kicked in

Since last autumn, I have been coming back to Lasham as often as possible at weekends to work towards white and later red card. Flying over the winter period has allowed me to get experience of gliding in a variety of weather

One of Martyn's instructors: Jordan Bridge

conditions. It was in January that I learnt what are probably the two most used phrases in gliding; "It will definitely get better later" and "You should have been here yesterday".

The next major milestone was converting to glass fibre in a venerable K21, before flying the Grob 102. On my second launch in it, I managed 3 hours 54 minutes. I had got cold flying in the shade under the clouds and so I had moved out where it was sunny. Inevitably I was soon on the ground. I then learned that everyone has a story of them missing out on a milestone by a small amount. The lesson was to buy some thicker socks.

There are a few bits I need to get signed off on my red card and I will work towards the Bronze Badge. I would love to get my Silver and start going cross-country, but it is probably a while off yet but getting involved with the guys charging up and down the country looks fun. Might even try and get the old man to help out and haul us out of the field that I will inevitably end up in.

I would like to thank all the instructors, people who help out running the weekends, and everyone in general who has put up with my numpty questions and with my bad excuses for poor flying (the sun glare was a bit strong today, honest). While Lasham is obviously a huge gliding club, its always seemed personable.

Martyn Oliver

Editorial

The last few months has seen the sad passing of some notable members: Derek Tagg, Jim Lyell, John Caton and Kay Draper. No longer are the notices on the board about people who joined when Roy Cross was in short trousers. Suddenly it is my generation.

What has struck me is that there were whole dimensions of their lives of which I knew nothing until the eulogies. I only ever talked to them about gliding and I feel I have missed a lot.

At my alma mater there used to be an archaic rule called 'sconcing'. While eating you could be challenged to consume a huge quantity of beer, at your expense, if you talked about your subject or the pictures on the wall, used more than three words of a foreign language or talked disrespectfully about members of the opposite sex. Why not occasionally talk to other members about anything but gliding?

****

As usual New Year arrived with amazing speed, but my focus could switch to the prospect of lengthening days and, in a few weeks, conditions would surely permit numerous kilometres at high speed. Initially there was the odd mediocre day to get into practice, but then the weather had to be just right. But, sometimes it was a bit windy, some cirrus was due to come in, spread-out might occur, a sea-breeze was possible, or the cloud-base might only be 3000ft above the ground. It often felt better to wait. The perfect day was surely coming. I was expecting that RASP and Top Meteo were going to tell me that I would take off at 10:22, avoid a large blob of something at 12:27 and the time when I should be back before the thermal strength had fallen below 4 knots.

There was a time that Derek Piggott required us pre-cross country pilots to do 100 solos before we could set off in a K8 to do our Silvers. So, I flew on all sorts of days and enjoyed myself hugely. The purpose of this is to say that the actual weather is often much better than the forecast might suggest, but even if not, there is fun to be had. Even while I am still turbo-less, I am therefore going to resolve to fly on less-than perfect days. Otherwise New Year will have come round yet again with its usual surprising speed and the perfect day still will not have happened.

The day after writing this, I flew. It was crap. ***Editor***

Odd ode to Percy

This ode appeared anonymously in the M pigeon hole. It was decoded as coming from our friends at Kestrel Gliding Club at Odiham. I have no idea about its historical accuracy, or its literary quality, but it contains a useful warning. Editor

An adventurous chappie lay watching the sky,
And to his amazement, a glider flew by.
I'd like to do that, he was heard to mutter,
So he joined the Kestrel Club, his heart in a flutter.
He pulled and he pushed, he wrote in his log,
He flew, pushed some more, and worked like a dog.
He worked through the training, his money all spent,
Instructors all satisfied, off solo he went.
Through bronze and through silver our pundit did fly,
And visions of diamonds bespangled the sky.

One day he was flying too low over Wales,
Must land in that field and dodge those straw bales.
He completed his base leg, the field looked so small
And, blast it, those bales had grown somewhat tall.
"Did I go too far back? The wind seems quite strong."
Poor Percy switched off, and in gliding that's wrong.
"If I go a bit slower I'll just clear those bales,"
Exclaimed Pundit Percy alone over Wales.
He eased back on the stick and up came the nose,
Things looked much better and so his spirits arose.

"I'll make it, I'll make it," he crowed like a hen,
"Best go a bit slower, the field's risen again."
But now Pundit Percy was going too slow,"
The wind was too strong, and he was too low.
There was just one action for Perce in a fright,
Just one, and no more, to put things alright.
If he'd piled on the speed and dived for the ground
He'd have cleared those damn bales in one mighty bound.

But he decided he'd better jink right just a bit
He'd not bank his wing, 'cos the tree he might hit.

There's no plane that flies on the point of a stall
That'll go any way with no bank at all.
It'll obviously want to develop a spin,
And will no room to pull out, it's bound to pile in.
This happened to Percy the Pundit in Wales,
And they buried him there beneath the straw bales.
We all went to the funeral, attended in force,
Said the right things, we were sorry of course.
But at the back of our minds lay the unkindest thought,
That because Perce was a clot, we're one glider short.

We all think we're good, and some of us are,
We fly very fast and we fly very far;
Some are quite old and some very old,
Some of us timid and some of us bold;
Some are the pundits, the lords of the sky,
And some are the new boys, just learning to fly.
We all make mistakes and forget what we learnt,
Like the child with the matches we're going to get burnt.

So remember this tale, it's quite clear to all,
If you're flying too slowly, your aircraft will STALL.
If you've plenty of height, you'll just get some thrills,
But if you are too low, it certainly kills.

KGC Poet Laureate

(all lists are alphabetical. Some posts are part-time)

Committee of Management
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Chris Marren
John McCullagh (Hon Treasurer)
Mike Philpott (Vice chairman)
Julian Richardson
Colin Short

General Manager
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Flying staff
Ed Lockhart
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Jordan Bridge
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G Pullen
Scott Thompson
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Cleaners
Keith & Barbara Chiverton

Restaurant and bar franchisees
Golden Glider Ltd (Alice, Fi and Nick Christides)
01256 384 910

Other roles
Dave Bowtell (Youth Scheme)
Dave Hopgood (Tugmaster)
Colin Jackson (Airspace)
Gary Pullen (Safety Officer)
Colin Watt (Child Protection Officer)

Sub-committee chairmen
Caravan - Jill Atkinson
Competitions - Joan Bickers
Flying - Colin Watt
Marketing - vacant
Social - vacant
Single-seaters - Colin Simpson

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 & Lasham Charitable Trust
The places for donations to make Lasham even better. The trustees are: Graham Garnett and Nigel Mallender, Mike Philpott and the Society's chairman

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