



FINAL GLIDE

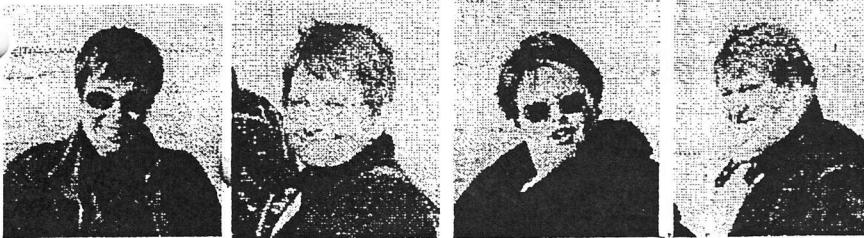
Issue 20: Easter 2000

Edited by Phil Hawkins

In this issue

DG-505 ARRIVES!

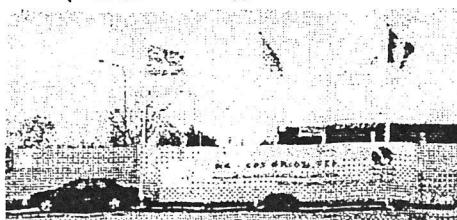
"WELCOME TO MY WORLD"
by the C-Team



Although a small club, we have been very fortunate in being able to acquire a brand new DG505 Orion, funded from savings over several years, and the unfortunate demise of our Grob Acro. We had the option of it being delivered to us, at a small price, but some of us thought - "we can do it cheaper than that!" (famous last words). So started the 4 day epic trip in a slightly tired Citroen Xantia to the DG factory in Germany, with the "C-Team" on board - Cris, Claire, Carole, and in case of translation problems, Claudia. The plan was a good one. We would drive to Dover Wednesday evening, stay at a local pub for the night, then get the early ferry to Calais. Then we would drive to Claudia's sister who lives about 1 hour from the factory. On Friday we would pick up the glider, and on Saturday a leisurely journey home. As I say - it was a good plan.

We could tell it was going to be "one of those trips" when we arrived at the pub just outside Dover. It is often used by the local gliding club, a good recommendation we thought. I must admit, the landlord and landlady were excellent hosts, the food was first rate, and the beer very drinkable. So too was the vodka, which was being consumed at a rapid rate by the landlord. A sure sign was the nearly empty bottle of brandy left next to the coffee machine "in case we wanted a tipple with our coffee in the morning". We found it hard to believe they made any profit.

We had a very pleasant sailing to Calais, having a good breakfast in the restaurant on-board the ferry, and watching the seagulls soaring the side of the ship as we sailed into harbour. After topping up with fuel in Calais (just a few bottles to last the weekend you understand), we headed south (well east actually).



The journey started well, making good time, with pleasant chatter on the way. But the journey was a long one, and after some hours, it has to be said that things took a turn for the worse.

continued inside....

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Trailer insurance

The Acro rides again

Memories of the eclipse in August

Gliding in Jamaica

The OGC List Server

I learnt about Gliding from that

Whacked bum for first solo

A Grand Day Out

"Just in Time"

Friday Night Flying

How NOT to crew

Complete member list

....and more!



WELCOME TO MY WORLD continued from front page

The rot probably started just as we entered Germany from Luxembourg. An innocent question, followed by an innocent reply: "Where are we?"

"In Germany, about half way down."

"Is that like Wales?"

Now this may make sense to you (if it does, I suggest some therapy), but it certainly did not at the time. Of course, what was being asked was "If Germany was England, then would we be in Wales?" Now that makes much more sense. This was shortly followed by the reasonable observation that with the snow on the hills, it looked "bright and hilly" – except at night time Claudia pointed out.

Now we had a very vivid picture at this stage of all the hills disappearing in Germany after dark, which did lead to some very bizarre discussions on reality. Are the hills really there? Are they there even beyond our sight? Is reality just a bubble around us, in our immediate vicinity?

To test the idea, we conducted a serious scientific study, with the following conclusion. If you put your headlamps on full (at night time of course - when the hills are flat) then a car is created just outside your "bubble of reality" and comes towards you into your reality. Try it yourself. It works! Every time we put the headlamps on main beam, we could create a new car. Sometimes more than one. It worked every time – conclusive proof of our theory on reality!

It was therefore probably a good thing that at about this time the lights failed on the trailer, forcing us to stop for a while (before we had a theory that the cars coming towards us were not really there, but just a figment of our imagination – let us devise an experiment)

This is where we were fortunate to have Claudia, a native German with us, to find help in the form of a torch. She tried a few trucks, but none had torches (Claudia was not impressed, but did stress they were Southern German, which is quite different to her native Northern German.)

Finally, we got the help of one truck driver, who was very efficient in completely dismantling our tow bar electrics. Eventually we managed to persuade him it was only a fuse blown, and we wanted his torch to see which one. But the thought was there.

It gave Claudia a chance to practice her German though, which it appeared was somewhat lacking after 2 years in England. We thought she would at least be able to translate a restaurant menu – but No, it was Southern German, so she could not translate it. We asked her at one point for the German word for wheel-wrench, but that escaped her also. So much for bringing a translator. But we did get inside knowledge about the behaviour of German hills after dark!



So eventually, with reality rapidly slipping beyond our grasp, we arrived at Claudia's sister, to a very warm welcome, some beer, and after a couple of hours a very welcome bed for the night (more than one bed really Ian if you are reading this).

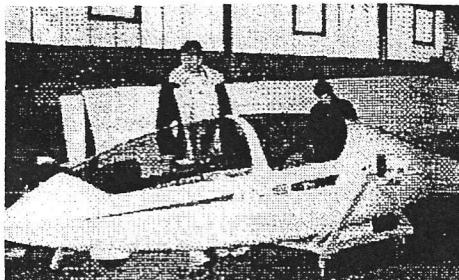
In the morning, we woke to a blizzard. Now you must understand, German

snow is very different to, for example, Luxembourg snow. We had great plans for Friday afternoon – after taking possession of the glider (which was quite nice really, but more of that later, let us stay with the important bits first) we had plans to go sledging. Claudia was very confident about this. But here is the difference – German snow lasts about 10 minutes. Luxembourg snow is deep, white, luxurious – but

not German snow. Let me be more specific – Southern German snow! So much for the sledging.

We went to the factory Friday morning, about

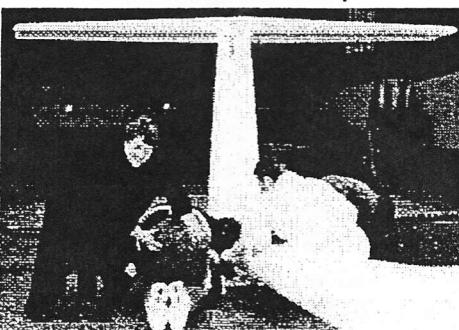
1½ hours drive. The factory was a series of long sheds – basically. It was nowhere near an airfield (to my surprise) but in the middle of an industrial estate. Our new glider was in a "hangar" (one of the long sheds) and was worth the trip! It was clean (a first for OGC) and all the corners were still sharp. They won't stay like that for long, but for now – a delight.



There was a little reluctance to rig the glider at first (it was raining) but we eventually got someone to help who knew how to rig it. There was some confusion over the pitot cushions and numbers,

which required some hasty calls to Pete Brooks to find what exactly we had ordered, but eventually they admitted their mistake, fetched the tube and cushions, and said they would pay for the cost of adding the numbers. Claudia also found some scratches on the canopy, which were worked on whilst we rigged the glider.

Having also shown us how to fill the water ballast in the tail, we eventually took final



possession of our new glider. We arranged to pick it up the next morning on the way home, and proceeded back to Claudia's sister for no sledging at all...

The journey back was less eventful (and you believe that?) We made the decision to go back via France so that we could catch the hypermarkets before they shut. Claire wanted a particular bottle of wine, so we stopped in France, and what do you know? – they did not have the wine she wanted.

Now, after a couple of days in close proximity, my theory is that people revert to their more basic personalities. In this particular case, Carole and Claudia decided to have an all out fight to see who could read the only good book in the car (which, and do not believe a word of what anyone says, was MY book.) Talk about two children fighting – it was embarrassing. It was only stopped when Claudia snatched the book from my hands when I had a break from driving, which is sufficient reason to come to blows for any sane person.

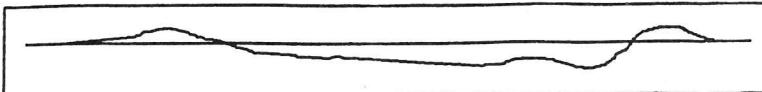
We stayed the night at St Quentin, just 1 hr from Calais. Next morning we had to find our way back to the motorway. We had a new navigator, who, after some careful consideration about our location (a heavily built up area) and track (going the wrong way) *continued inside back cover*



HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED....

....what would happen if you took a barograph through the channel tunnel?

Well, I did it, and the results were nothing like what I expected. On the outward journey from Folkestone I made the mistake of leaving the barograph on 10hr setting, so the whole thing was too compressed, but here's a tracing of the return journey which I made at the 2hr setting so that everything is stretched horizontally. France is on the left, Britain on the right:



When the train first entered the tunnel, there was a marked decrease in pressure as if we had climbed about 300 or 400 feet - absolutely the last thing I expected to see as the train descended into the bowels of the earth.

The possible explanation for this could be a venturi effect of some kind. As the train enters the tunnel, gathering speed, perhaps there is a suction effect due to the limited clearance between the outer shell of the carriage and the wall of the tunnel. This would level off once the train reached cruising speed.

There followed a gradual increase in pressure until the trace showed perhaps 500 feet below the base line, with an interesting "hump" about three-quarters of the way across. The rise to Folkestone was much steeper than the descent from Sangatte, but whether this is a real indication of the tunnel profile, or another suction effect, is debatable. On the British side, the trace again went above the base line before descending smoothly, the zero point being reached just as the train emerged from the tunnel. The difference between the base lines on the French and British side was imperceptible.

I'd be interested to hear of anyone taking a barograph on other pressure-sensitive journeys, such as a circuit of the "London Eye" big wheel.

Editor

THE ACRO RIDES AGAIN, AND AGAIN, AND AGAIN.....

Whether you loved or hated it whilst it lived, the ACRO is still providing enjoyment for many. At the 3 July all day flying event I took a video camera on an aerobatic flight with Andy Butterfield at the controls. This was done mainly due to the persistence of my pupils, who were intrigued at the thought of someone as inhuman as their teacher having a life at the weekend, let alone doing something fun! (Most believe that teachers are deflated and packed away until Monday, 9.00 am. You decide).

During the last fortnight of the summer term I showed the tape to several groups and had more fun watching them watching the tape than they did watching the aerobatics. One child was a bit green after being told that the lens cap had in fact fallen in front of the camera due to us hanging in our straps at the top of one of Andy's more *avant garde* manoeuvres.

When the video was recently requested during an otherwise dull lesson, I leapt at the chance of wishing myself elsewhere and duly obliged. The lesson had been on the potentially destructive power of forces and the effect of

RISKS OF TRAILER TOWING

There has been some discussion recently amongst members concerning the problem of obtaining insurance cover for towing a glider trailer on public roads.

I've just checked my trailer cover with Green Flag. They definitely don't include cover for trailers longer than 17 feet. A separate commercial pay-on-use arrangement is all they can offer. I always thought that Green Flag did cover glider trailers. Anybody got any ideas? (Alex Jenkins)

Green Flag changed their policy in 1999 - they will not cover a glider trailer at all now. The RAC will cover a trailer up to about 7.5 metres (not quite enough) but say that they would do all they could to recover a glider trailer - unless the Police objected to the recovery. Looks like Green Flag will be losing a lot of customers. (Matt Gage)

I looked at the AA policy recently and I think that they will recover trailers up to 6m or thereabouts. Not quite enough. (Dave Nisbet)

I spoke to 'Britannia Rescue' - they say they will recover a car and trailer, providing that it is the car that has the problem. They are happy to tow the glider trailer back as well. The problem is when the trailer breaks, they can't get it on the back of the standard pick up truck. (Joe Hoskins)

On a return trip from Feshie in 1998 I had a slightly iffy water leak and managed to put a big airlock in the system while topping up. The temperature gauge went into the red at some god-forsaken place on the motorway that I'd only heard about in terms of things closing down there in the 70's. Anyway, nice Dave from the AA turned up and towed us off the motorway - that's to the next junction as opposed to just pitching car and trailer over the embankment. When he'd finished fiddling he recommended a relay recovery.

"What about that?" I asked, pointing to the trailer which he had apparently failed to notice.

"Oh, I'll have to check" replied Dave strangely, but that was because he was from some other god-forsaken place I'd never heard of.

"Sorry, can't tek that an all" was the AA's decision. Dave's advice was either to leave it at the side of the motorway, or tow it to a garage where the car could be repaired and come back for it later.

Thanking Dave for his advice and borrowing eight gallons of water from him, we set off for Weston with no further trouble.

The moral of the story? Yer buggered if yer towing a glider and the car breaks down. (Steve McCurdy)

Editor's note: see the April/May issue of Sailplane and Gliding for the latest information on this subject.

large masses on kinetic energy. I decided to capitalise on the unfortunate events of 11th July and spin the yarn about how the ACRO came to its end. The word 'stunned' leaps to mind, as 25 year 11 pupils listened in disbelief to the devastating details and the punchline of 'only a cut on the instructors toe'.

Whether I enthused them or put them off for life I cannot say, but 7 pupils recently expressed an interest in the Club Cadetship and obtained application forms! If you would like to see this short film for old times' sake there is now a copy by the video in the Clubhouse.

Stuart Otterburn

CFI'S TURN



I think there is little doubt that the "season" has now started. We have already had one landout (I felt I had to set the ball rolling)

and one 50km Silver attempt (did not reach Bicester, but the thought was there!) - what else is there to do?

I intend to keep this section brief, but I do want to raise a few points of particular note.

Duty Pilots – this is always mentioned, but just a reminder to all duty pilots that with the season starting, and everyone champing at the bit to get onto the field, YOU can help immensely by getting people to start preparing the equipment in the morning. I am sure you would appreciate this when it is your turn to fly!

Use of Gliders – despite having the new DG505, I do not propose any changes to the way gliders are utilised. In other words, it is still a first come first served system. Clearly if this system starts to be abused, and a few start monopolising the club gliders (this applies to Astirs as well as DG505!), then the situation will be reviewed. I hope that

ALL MEMBERS will get to use the club fleet equally, and there is no feeling that any one sub-group should get preferential treatment. If you think that is happening, let me know!

Cross Country Course – I plan to hold a task week / XC course during the week preceding the Juniors (week beginning 21st August), with the DG505 being put to full use during that week. Let me know if you want to participate, either solo, or in the DG505.

Junior Nationals – the preparations are progressing well. There will be club flying alongside the competition, but given that we will have had 2 weeks flying before hand, I do not expect instructors to be available for 2-seat training. But solo pilots and private owners will have the opportunity for aerotowing and winch launching during the week. Weekend operations will continue much as normal, with hopefully as little disruption as possible to the flying activities. But do not forget the "end-of-comp" party on Saturday 2nd September!

Finally, have a happy season, and above all
BE SAFE.

FRIENDLY AIRLINES

This is a true story published in the Chicago Tribune "Travel" section for Sunday, June 6th 1999, in a story entitled "Choppy Skies - A white-knuckle flight on Air Zimbabwe" by Gaby Plattner. It seems that Plattner was travelling with a backpacking group through Africa and they found themselves waiting in Kariba airport for a flight to Hwange.

Our flight was delayed, so we settled down to wait. And wait. Three hours later, we were finally told the plane was ready to board. Air Zimbabwe bought many of its planes second-hand from other airlines, and the one we got into was no exception. Dirty and ancient, the mid-size jetliner was clearly one that no one else had wanted. Inside, we settled into the seats with 80 or 90 other passengers and waited. And waited some more. Finally, the pilot's voice came over the loudspeaker.

"We're all ready to go ladies and gentlemen. However, we've been waiting for the copilot, and he still hasn't arrived. Since we've already waited so long, we're just going to be flying without a copilot today." There was a nervous buzz through the cabin. He continued, "If any of you

feel uncomfortable with this, feel free to disembark now and Air Zimbabwe will put you on the next available flight to Hwange."

Here he paused. "Unfortunately, we are not sure when that will be. But rest assured, I have flown this route hundreds of times, we have clear blue skies, and there are no foreseeable problems." No one in Plattner's group, doubtful as they might have been, wanted to wait any longer at Kariba for a plane that may or may not materialise, so they stayed on board for the one-hour flight.

Once the aircraft reached cruising altitude, the pilot came on the loudspeaker again "Ladies and gentlemen. I am going to use the bathroom. I have put the plane on auto-pilot and everything will be fine. I just don't want you to worry." That said, he came out of the cockpit, fastened the door open with a rubber band to a hook on the wall. Then he went to the bathroom. *Plattner continues:* suddenly, we hit a patch of turbulence. Nothing much, the cabin just shook a little for a moment. But the rubber band snapped off with a loud 'ping!' and went sailing down the aisle. The door promptly swung shut. A moment

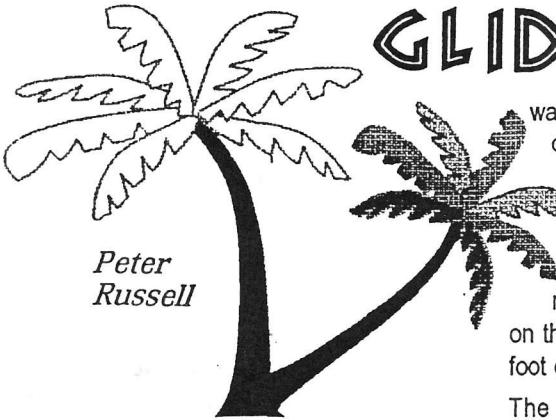
later, the pilot came out of the bathroom. When he saw the closed door, he stopped cold. I watched him from the back and wondered what was wrong.

The stewardess came running up, and together they both tried to open the door, but it wouldn't budge. It slowly dawned on me that our pilot was locked out of the cockpit. Cockpit doors lock automatically from the inside to prevent terrorists from entering. Without a copilot, there was no one to open the door from the inside.

now, the rest of the passengers had become aware of the problem, and we watched the pilot, horrified. What would he do?

After a moment of contemplation, the pilot hurried to the back of the plane. He returned holding a big axe. Without ceremony, he proceeded to chop down the cockpit door. We were rooted to our seats as we watched him. Once he managed to chop a hole in the door, he reached inside, unlocked the door and let himself back in. Then he came on the loudspeaker, his voice a little shakier this time than before. "Ah, ladies and gentlemen, we just had a little problem there, but everything is fine now. We have plans to cover every eventuality, even pilots getting locked out of their cockpits. So relax and enjoy the rest of the flight!"

contributed by Steve McCurdy



Peter
Russell

GLIDING IN JAMAICA

was covered with tropical forest so landing out was not an option. The only exception was- yes, Paul you guessed it- a polo field! I had opted to fly a right hand circuit in an attempt to find lift which took me over the foothills of the mountain. Although I still had about 650ft on the clock, it felt as if my rump was only a foot or two clear of the coconut palms.

The closer I came to landing, the more I realised that this experience was going to be just a bit more "different" but reassured by Sylvia's presence in the back seat, I kept telling myself "*yeah mon, me gonna do this- aint no problem*"

The circuit was a little cramped out of necessity because there was a tree-topped peak where you would normally regard the low key position to be. Once clear of the power lines it was virtually a full airbrake decent with little room for error.

After arriving with a thud (it would be incorrect to dignify my efforts by calling it a landing) I was treated to a service to which I was unaccustomed. I was driven back to the launch point and waited while the four or five local young men of the ground crew prepared everything for the next flight. The ground crew passed the time between launches by chewing on raw sugar cane. Having tried it for myself, I can report that it compares favourably with pot noodles!

I had three more flights on the first day with the weather deteriorating all the time. With a cloud base of about 900ft, the top of the mountains were obscured and electric storms could be seen out at sea. The flying came to an end when the rain finally came our way and we had another deluge.

By the time we had pegged down the glider, I was wearing nothing but shorts, covered in mud and looked like a character from the Lord of the Flies. Sylvia took pity and offered overnight accommodation. As we were leaving the airfield, I realised that the straw filled trailer was the ground crew's dormitory.

In marked contrast, the house in which Sylvia was staying was magnificent. It was enclosed in a garden full of tropical plants, butterflies, humming birds and fireflies. There weren't many lizards in the garden as most of them had taken up residence inside the house!

Knowing that Rob and I had developed a taste for Caribbean cuisine, Sylvia took us along with another club member to Aunt Mae's restaurant where we dined on spicy pea soup and goat curry.

After a night's rest interrupted by yet another tropical storm, an unidentified critter making loud grunting noises outside the bedroom door, and mosquitoes that had developed a taste for English cuisine, we returned to the club for more flying. With the sun shining, I at last found lift over the mountains but I still had to endure the ignominy of Rob, who had only a total of seven flights experience, staying aloft longer than me. I'm not sure whether this is a tribute to Sylvia's instruction or an indictment of my flying skills (no postcards please)

Due to its location, Blenheim Gliding Club has a great potential for offering holiday courses and air-experience flights to tourists. The club's most immediate problem in becoming established, however, appears to be a lack of local instructors. The imperative for the club must be for its own members to progress to become full cats and this is not going to happen overnight for a club starting from scratch.

I am sure that William would be delighted, therefore, to hear from any instructor who has time for a sabbatical and could take over when Sylvia finishes her tour of duty. Please don't be put off by the rain as I am told that it only occurs when I go on holiday!

Although this embryonic club is not yet in a position to offer the facilities we enjoy at OGC, if any members are ever in this part of the world I would recommend that they drop in at Blenheim where the flying is both challenging and enjoyable, the views spectacular and hospitality is second to none.

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INSTRUCTORS AT OGC have often advised me of the need to gain experience of flying in as many different situations and conditions as possible. With this in mind, I contacted the recently formed Blenheim Gliding Club in Jamaica before going there for a holiday to arrange a couple of days flying. My travelling companion, Rob, decided he would also like to try his hand at gliding for the first time. The response from William Masterton, who founded the club, was extremely helpful and welcoming when we arranged the details over the web.

My story begins the day before we flew which started with a cloudburst; by midday it was raining more heavily and by the time night fell it had turned into a monsoon of biblical proportions. As a result of all this "liquid sunshine", when we arrived at the club at Chukka Cove after a three hours drive from our hotel, it looked more like a paddy field than an airfield. We were greeted at the gate by the CFI, Sylvia Bateman, standing barefoot ankle deep in mud. It was at this point I began to realise just how different this experience was going to be.

The club's facilities consisted of a K7, a winch and two lorry trailers filled with straw; the purpose of which eluded me. The field was about a third of the length of Weston, 150 metres wide at the launch point tapering to about 50 metres down by the winch with a gentle undulation in between. My first reaction was to ask myself whether I was ready for my first field landing!

Within twenty minutes of arriving at the club we were flying but with a field of this length, I only managed to get about 750ft off the launch. As I turned and looked down back at the field, it took on the appearance of a truncated postage stamp when seen through my inexperienced eyes. The club is situated on a strip of land about two miles wide sandwiched between the coast and a mountain range; nearly every square inch of which

THE OGC LIST SERVER

You may have seen a couple of notices up in the clubhouse and caboose, or have heard people discussing the latest e-mail from the 'list server.' This short article should explain what the server does and how to gain access to it.

Put simply, the list server is a mechanism to broadcast your e-mail message to a whole group of people. You don't need to know who is in the group, you just post your message once to the list server. It is the job of the list server to send your message out to all the other list members. At the last count there were around 40 OGC members (and 'ex' members) on the list.

So, to gain access you need an e-mail address. Without that you've got no chance! Most people who use the service seem to use their office e-mail address. Others use a computer at home and one of the many free email providers such as 'hotmail'. You can easily spot the office e-mail users because they post silly jokes in the middle of the afternoon when they should be working. (Are you there Paul Morrison?)

Once you have your e-mail address you can then apply to join the list server 'group.' To do that, send an e-mail message to 'majordomo@avnet.co.uk'.

Leave the subject of the message blank, and in the body of the message have the line 'subscribe oxfordgc.' Try to avoid anything else in the message, such as footers. Also try to post your message in plain text and not in HTML. Outlook has a tick box marked 'send as HTML.' Ensure this left blank. After a couple of minutes a reply should be sent back to you asking for confirmation. Follow the instructions in that message and you will be joined to the oxfordgc@avnet.co.uk group.

Remember to keep your messages brief, and avoid large attachment files. We've already had the system crash once because somebody tried to post a video clip file to it.

And as to the quality and quantity of the messages you can expect to receive, well, it's very variable. Sometimes a whole week will go by with no activity at all. In other weeks you can get a flood of messages. Sometimes the messages will be useful, for example telling of RAF activity on the airfield, and other times just idle chattering.

Neil Swinton

Editorial:

Where were you on August 11th?

It's one of those dates that will cause many people to recall where they were and what they were doing when it happened. What am I talking about? The eclipse of the Sun, that's what.

11th August 1999 is a date that I learned to anticipate with pleasure, reading books in the school library when I was about 12. During most of the 20th century total eclipse tracks had avoided the British mainland, and I just knew I had to be there on the tip of Cornwall when the great day came. OK so it was dull and cloudy but that was predictable with almost the same mathematical certainty as the movements of the Moon itself.

I looked every inch the eclipse spotter with my tripod, telescope and home-made projection box. The box, a cardboard structure supported by string, masking tape and willpower, gave a safe view of the Sun's disc about three inches in diameter on a white screen. In the days leading up to the eclipse it was extensively tested by noting the progress of sun spots as they marched their way across the face of the Sun. After a long night listening to the distant bump-de-bump of the Lizard '99 Pop Festival and the depressing sight of their projected laser flowers dancing on the underside of the cloud deck, the great day dawned grey and damp.

There were glimpses of the extremely thin crescent Sun about two minutes before the total phase, and again about five minutes afterward, but just too bad the holes in the cloud weren't arranged a bit more conveniently.

The seconds ticked away and suddenly it came, the onset of partial darkness which rushed up from the west and seemed to settle overhead. Colours on the ground were washed out to shades of grey - trees, grass, hedges. At the same time the horizon in all directions appeared strangely bright, with curious colours of mauve and sandy-brown peeking through the cracks in the cloud. Birds were silent, and some flew about aimlessly as if searching for roosting places. The Hercules aircraft broadcasting the TV pictures could be heard droning overhead.

And that was that, my eclipse experience after waiting for half a lifetime. The sky brightened again and every-

thing returned to normal, just another drizzly day in a Cornish holiday camp. Other Club members made different choices, of course, and thereby maximised their chances of seeing something more memorable.

Richard Hall hired a Grob motor glider from Enstone (which he booked 2 years ago) and flew out over the English Channel to view the eclipse from above the clouds.

Matt Gage chose a boat: *"Managed to see a fantastic total eclipse (lasted about 1min 50sec) with no cloud obscuring it - location - about 45 miles south-east of the Isle of Wight. Well worth the trip (and 100 gallons of diesel - Dad paid.)"*

Patrick Wallace went to Germany *"Sorry you patriotic types got clouded out, though I hear the partial phases were seen well from Oxfordshire. I watched the total eclipse (my third, which must qualify me for a special anorak) from just north of Munich. Meticulous planning turned out to have placed me strategically under a cloud street, which provided intervals of refreshing rain in addition to 100% protection from the evil death rays."*

"A last-ditch white-knuckle drive (in an Avis Renault Clio) towards a blue patch placed us (myself and two sons) in rapidly fading sunshine two minutes before totality. We got a perfect view. For the first time, I remembered to look for planets (Venus and Mercury both conspicuous) and used binoculars to see the structure of the corona and the prominences more clearly. Photographs don't do the prominences justice: they're very bright and very pink."

"During totality, we could see airliners on the approach to Munich Airport as per usual, and one lone car drove along the road by us, no doubt with the driver wondering why it had got so sodding dark."

Last word, however, goes to Neil Swinton with this slightly worrying email message:

"In Berkhamstead (no jokes please) we had clear skies and then thickening clouds so the eclipse was easily visible with the naked eye. Wonderful. Unfortunately I can't seem to see mu keynord ani morw, its all goinh dark.....Beil"

Martin Brown

I LEARNT ABOUT GLIDING FROM THAT

For those of you who don't know me, I was a member of the OGC from 1971 to 1991. I was never a very adventurous soul but I like to think that I helped some members along the way and I also liked to think that I was pretty competent at cloud flying – until the day it all went wrong. John Gibbon's recent report of his rather more glorious climb reminded me of several things that happened to me.

Because of a parachute competition at WOG, we were flying from Enstone. I took off in the Pirat and struggled away in weak lift being blown rapidly northwards. Cloudbase turned out to be about 3500ft and the thermals were so widely spaced that progress in that breeze was hit and miss so I decided I would cloud fly, if possible, to reduce the chance of landing out. After wallowing fairly aimlessly around Stratford, I eventually decided to head off to Enstone. *En route* I climbed up under an isolated cloud and then, rather slowly, climbed up into it.

Because of the slow climb rate, I began to get concerned about drifting into the controlled air space at Birmingham – so, without thinking about it very carefully, I took the map out and started to work out my likely position. That was not a good idea! In clear air you simply read the map and you only look up to check for other traffic. You don't need to check that you are flying properly, you just fly instinctively. In cloud though, instincts simply don't work.

Although it didn't even cross my mind that I had problems, I became aware that the Pirat didn't feel right and also that I was flying too fast. The ASI showed 60 kts, no problem, ease the stick back a little and as soon as the speed starts to reduce ease off the back

pressure and back to the map. Shortly thereafter, "hang on - why the hell am I going too fast again?" Pull back again, "Wow – why am I pulling so much G? Did I pull back too far? No, 70 kts, I can't possibly be climbing – I must be turning!" Reduce the bank, "There, hardly turning now." Pull back again - more G, "Sod it!" Take the bank off and try again, "There, wings virtually level", ease back, "Arggh", more G.

Struggling now to keep the speed below 80 kts, with dark imaginings of involuntary aerobatics in cloud I decided to give up and gently pulled on the brake lever. It wouldn't move – now what? Pull harder - nothing, "What the hell is wrong?" Pull harder still – bang! The brakes crashed open against their stops and the poor old Pirat began to shake and shudder with ominous cracking noises and loud bangs from the tail. "What's going on?" I checked the position of the canopy release and the parachute rip-cord. At that point I feared that the glider was about to break-up.

It didn't of course and after what seemed an age, shuddering it's way down through 4000ft of cloud, the Pirat emerged into clear air and I realised for the first time that I had serious icing dragging me out of the sky. That, of course, was the cracking and banging! It was also why I couldn't open the brakes.

I flew out into the sunshine to melt the ice but soon realised that involved flying in sink with the vario almost on the stop. I settled for a slow melt under the cloud and struggled to centre in the lift whilst peering through the CV panel. It felt like 30 minutes before I could see properly. By the time the canopy had cleared, there was still the odd lump of melting ice on the leading edge. It was about half an

inch thick at that point but most of it had gone so I never did know how thick it had been.

What went wrong? It's easy to work it out after the event:

1. I should have been monitoring the ice build-up, especially in a long slow climb.

2. I should have realised that the odd feel of the Pirat was due to ice, or more accurately, I should not have ignored the fact that it simply felt wrong.

3. I was rather too cocky trying to read a map in cloud.

4. Most importantly, in the heat of the moment, I stupidly failed to recognise the difference between rate of turn and angle of bank. When I had checked that I wasn't banked over much, before trying to reduce speed, the T&S showed a very slow rate of turn. Well it would at 70kts, wouldn't it!

I experimented on the way back to Enstone and found that at 70kts I was banked well over for a very slow indicated rate of turn. Obviously when you pull back when banked, you pull more G. So simple when you think about it but I didn't think about it at the right time.

Incidentally, when I got back to Enstone, without further forays into cloud, I experimented using full brake whilst spiral diving at 80kts in the manner I must have done in the cloud. To my surprise, the Pirat shook all over the place, just like it had done in cloud. I wished I had known that an hour earlier too.

AGM REPORT

The 49th AGM of the Oxford Gliding Club was held on Saturday 20th November

1999 in the briefing room above the clubhouse, with an attendance of around 60-65 members, fairly average for recent years.

Chairman Peter Brooks noted that next year will be the Club's 50th year. A big celebration is planned, either at the 50th AGM or earlier in the summer. The weather in 1999 had been disappointing, however launches were up by 700 and total cross-country kilometres was about the same as in 1998. There were 2 first solos, 3 completed bronze badges, 6 silver (only 2 in 1998) and one gold (George Crawford). George has now acquired a Mini-Nimbus, and the Club have purchased his Astir CS.

Peter thanked Norman Hedge for organising the most successful season of Friday evening flying so far. Norman is standing down from this task and Carole Shepherd will be organising these events in 2000. Peter also thanked Neil Turner, Paul Rogers and others for their hard work in fitting out the new launch point bus, which was used for the first time on AGM day itself.

Treasurer Nick Hill reported that the Acro insurance money had now been received (£25,550) and that there had been an operating surplus of £14,000 in 1999. The Site Trust Fund total consequently stands at £49,000, the majority

of which would be spent on the Acro replacement. Members voted to increase the Club subscription from £140 to £150.

The Club's new President was announced: John Bridgeman, the Director General of the Office of Fair Trading, and Deputy Lord Lt. of Oxfordshire. He was featured in a recent Sunday Times article and named as "the 5th most influential person in the country."

CFI Cris Emson summarised preparations for the Junior Nationals competition in August 2000. The RAF are co-operating fully, giving us the use of the northern two-thirds of the main hangar and other buildings. The competition director will be Pete Stratten, and the scorer Tim Newport-Peace. Justin Wills will give briefings and de-briefings.

The Simpson Cup went to Phil Hawkins for a 360km triangle, the Ladder Trophy and M. Laurie Memorial Trophy both went to Howard Stone. The Dennis Farmer trophy (earliest 5hrs of season) went to Maz. The CFI's 2-up trophy went to John Gibbons for services to instructing, while Andy Butterfield collected the "Deep Breath" cup. Other awards included "A pair of Glasses" to Alex Jenkins, the Flying Brick to George Crawford, and the "Astir Padding Award" to Carole Shepherd. Tony Hoskins collected the £100 Churchill Award for gaining Bronze C before the age of 18.

Most of you know that I had a gliding history in a foreign gliding club before invading the OGC. And I don't get away with just talking about it - Phil volunteered me to write something about "the other club" in Germany.

The KLV Waldeck is a fairly small club, the airfield is situated near Diemelstadt, between Dortmund and Kassel - OK OK: Somewhere in the middle of Germany..

It's a nice airfield, with one landing strip, probably as wide as Nympsfield but not quite as long. I think the cable length is 800m. It's surrounded by a forest on two sides (north and east) and a valley on the other two sides. The approaches are quite interesting; if you land on runway 34 you have to come in over the valley and it feels like landing on an aircraft carrier - quite often there's a lot of sink on finals and you might end up in the bushes just before the airfield.

On runway 16 I used to aim for the highest trees sticking out from amongst the other trees, just before the airfield, and when I'd flown past them I knew I could use full airbrakes and wouldn't hit any other trees.

It is a "real gliding site", i.e. their facilities are pretty basic. Because it's on a hill and there were no settlements anywhere near it before they built the club house in 1984, there is no electricity. They have a generator which is switched on after flying, when it gets dark, so the pilots can sit in the club house and actually see their bottle of beer. Communal evenings are just as popular over there as they are in the OGC! (They don't have a proper bar though - but always loads of beer crates in the basement/garage next to the winch...)

There is a rainwater collection system for the shower and toilets. When you take a shower in the summer the water will be warm for maybe a minute or so and then get freezing cold - the first twenty meters of the hosepipe are situated right under the warm hangar roof, the rest comes out of a cistem. It does wake you up in the morning though. And the shower is an old yellow German phonebox. During my first flying fortnight at the club we didn't have the phonebox but instead had what was called a "solar shower" - a black 20 litre bag which was filled with water in the morning and left

in the sun for the day, and after flying we would hang it from a tree in the forest. Then, when it got dark, the girls were first to take a shower, then it was the blokes' turn - the water was always either freezing cold because we had forgotten to fill it in the morning, or it was boiling hot because it had been left in the sun all day.

MY OTHER CLUB

*Gliding in Germany
by Claudia*

As for the fleet: a lovely, beautiful, gorgeous, great fun to fly little Ka6E, one K13 called Elvira - she had to endure my first solo, two Ka8s, one of which if I remember rightly is called Hups (bouncy) because it has a tendency to bounce. Although perhaps that was the Ka7 which they sold this year. The Ka7 was so noisy in the back seat that we

put a pair of earplugs on the instrument panel for the instructor... There are two glass gliders, a newly acquired DG300 with winglets and their flagship, the K21.

Launching is by winch and they don't have a tug. Like most German clubs they shut down from the end of October until Easter. It can get quite cold in that area in the winter (-22 °C), and anyway they usually take the old Tost winch apart in the winter and hope to get it fixed by the next season.

Maintenance jobs on the gliders are done in the winter, as well as theory lessons. To take the theory test for the gliding licence you have to prove that you've attended at least 60hrs of theory lessons in six different subjects (those mentioned below plus radiotelephony). So all the instructors hold lessons in the winter...

In Germany you can solo before you're 16, but you can only take up gliding when you're 14. At the age of 17 you can try the tests to get the gliding licence which is more or less equivalent to the Bronze badge, although it's actually a PPL-C. This being Germany you need to get an official radio certificate - in the test the pilots have to simulate an approach and a takeoff at a commercial airport (I did a virtual flight to Düsseldorf) which is a bit odd when you're a glider pilot and will hopefully never get anywhere near these airports.

Then you have to take a theory test in five subjects - air law, navigation, aerodynamics, meteorology and general flying. Finally the practical test which consists of three circuits with a very official person from the local aviation authority. These flights involve all the usual exercises: some spinning or rather spin recovery, steep turns, sideslipping etc.

From this year on you have to do your 50km

between the theory and the flight test. Then you pay a lot of money and several weeks later you get a PPL-C. This PPL, however, is only valid for two years, so it has to be re-endorsed every two years, together with a class III medical. The good thing about having the PPL-C is that you can take passengers with you, which is great fun. And you can only go cross-country with a PPL-C. Basically, without the PPL-C you won't be allowed to do any proper gliding in a German club.

In most German clubs they have an interesting tradition for the first three solo flights. The pilot doesn't get told until the very last minute that he or she is about to go solo - in my "other club" actually only when the instructor removes the control stick from the K-13 back seat. Then he/she has to do three circuits, during which a few others go and collect some flowers around the airfield - a nice big bunch, which can get quite difficult in late October. The bunch of flowers has to contain some thistles, why, I don't know.

After the third landing we will push the glider in front of the hangar, the pilot receives his "A" pin and the flowers and then has to lean over the wing. All the others queue up and whack the pilot's bum - this is being done to increase the pilot's bum's sensitivity to thermals - and after that, to cool the pilot down, he/she usually - at least in the summer - gets one or two buckets of water poured over his/her bum. Everyone has to go through this - luckily only once, considering the many times I've resoled...

They also have a flying fortnight in the summer - every other year they travel to different clubs for this. Four years ago we went to Pirna near Dresden because the CFI had soloed on the banks of the river Elbe when he was 15 or 16 and hadn't been back since then (he's 71 now). The area around Dresden is spectacular, and Dresden itself is a beautiful city - although in places it was still quite grim four years ago.

The KLV Waldeck is a nice friendly club, and they welcome any pilot from the OGC who is brave enough to travel to this remote airfield in Germany

Editor's note: Claudia is usually too polite to cringe when ignorant Brits pronounce or spell her name wrongly. So if you want to make friends, just remember it's "Cloudier" Bügen (or Buengen) and not "Clawed ear" Bungen. To type a ü character on your keyboard hold down the Alt key, type 129 then release Alt.

A Grand Day Out

AThere must be lots of souls at WOG who don't even know me (count yourselves lucky). These days, I'm a bit of a non-entity when it comes to gliding. A move north to the Manchester area, family and work commitments, have all but curtailed my gliding for now, although I hope to return one day.

But each year, I try and get into a glider just the once, so I can tell myself I'm still involved with it. In 1998, when I effectively packed in gliding at Weston, there was a sad sentimental goodbye visit. Haste took me up for a spin circuit, tried his best to get me into a thermal and failed, followed by a hasty landing by me.

Late August 1999 found us on our regular holiday visit to Norfolk, with exceptionally good weather. I had always wanted to visit Norfolk GC at Tibenham, but it was a long way from our holiday area. Previously I never could persuade the family to give up a day going there, but 1999 was different, as I could honestly claim it was my only chance to take to catch a thermal in the final year of this millennium.

My family took pity and agreed a concessionary day. The weather was beginning to fade, but still had just enough heart. I phoned Norfolk GC and they encouraged me to drop by, with the promise that the waiting time would not be too long (important to be convinced of that in order to convince the family of same).

We arrived at a pleasant and well-equipped clubhouse, offering large mugs of tea and excellent fry-ups, and with a great sundeck

overlooking the grassed apron. Parking the family, I drove over to the launch point to check in.

I bumped into one of those lively debates one often finds on hot airfields when two seasoned stags disagree about who should be pulling what weight where in order to keep the airfield running. Nothing changes. One always remembers the heavenly moments, whilst time erases the more earthbound memories.

A little polite distancing and some mediation and the stags parted and went back to their respective posts. I got myself on the list, but everyone was staying up (yum!) which meant it could be some hours before I flew (drat!). Plus the booming sky was now over-convecting and might be dead before I could get my turn (double drat!).

I felt like giving up, but found the family happy and ordering lots of lunch, so I resolved to endeavour to persevere (as Churchill once said I think). In the meantime, I spotted a picture of James Stewart in a K-13 above the canteen counter, plus lots of old pics of B24 Liberators. I learned that Jimmie Stewart had been the commanding officer at Tibenham in WW2 and returned in the 70's to be flown as an honorary guest.

They had a whole album of very good pictures taken on the occasion of his visit, which I enjoyed being talked through; I was impressed by the thought that once, this young Hollywood actor had not been a publicity hero, but a real live quiet one. A whole wing of Liberators to take responsibility for. Even Cris Emson would blanch.

The rest of the day was uneventful. The day stayed thermic though not booming. I flew with a thoroughly nice instructor who ran a

restaurant, having left the business world behind (half the members seemed to be running restaurants or tea shops). He had found the time to pursue his gliding passion, albeit with a particular concern over getting home from cross countries in time to open up shop.

I managed a perfect aerotow, found my own thermal, managed to eventually centre it and ascend to 4000' or so whilst learning about the restaurant business. 45 mins, a couple of loops and chandelles later (which seemed to be at higher G than usual - or perhaps I'm just getting saggier) and I flew a decent circuit and held off well to come to a halt alongside the launch point. Its amazing how not feeling you should be able to fly well can help you to do so (with of course a little insurance sitting in the back seat).

Back on the ground, a pretty little yellow Piper Cub landed and taxied up to park next to the clubhouse. Its driver joined some old chums for a cup of tea and a natter. A roaring sound to the east of the airfield heralded the fast approach of two Harriers heading low and fast to overfly the field. At the last minute, in a flurry of vortices, they pulled high G turns to port and veered off short of us. I imagined the scene inside the cockpits. "Oh f**k Hoskins, the flaming GPS must be out again. It's a bloody gliding club. Hard left, Hard left!"

Tibenham would appeal to any OGC visitor, although the flying operations were typically ragged. Large grass airfield, good company, leisurely flying and decent clubhouse and bar. And Norfolk itself is a wonderful place to holiday. The ghost of Jimmie Stewart would definitely approve.

Mike O'Neill

FLYING THE NYMPHSFIELD DG-505

A motley crew consisting of a full-cat, a couple of half-cats, a couple of students, an ex-CFI, a standard OGC member (who manages not to rip the tail-skid off on one out of six landings) and John Gibbons, who is above categorisation, went to Nympsfield to fly their DG505. This, you may remember is the aircraft you voted for as the best replacement for the late, and perhaps only slightly lamented Acro.

The conclusion of most, or even all who flew it was that it's nice and it handles well (better than the Acro). Everybody we talked to at Nympsfield is very happy with it (well they would be as they got it for free) and nobody really had a bad word to say about its flying performance or comfort. Apparently, if you fill the tail ballast tank up, it will spin well, though without that John Gibbons was the only one who managed it.

The downside is that the front cockpit is very snug, though if you look at the photographs in the clubhouse you can see it's possible to get a volumetrically advantaged member squeezed in. Also, members of the weaker or limp-wristed persuasion may have a problem getting the undercarriage up. So, a nice glider, a nice day out, a nice airfield with great views of the Severn estuary and bridges - highly recommended all round. (Steve McCurdy)

A good description of the day from Steve. He did of course fail to mention the exacting scientific test I carried out on the strength of the undercarriage. This was a precision test and involved rounding out the glider about 2 seconds after it should have been done. The undercarriage remained in place, but I'm not sure the same could be said for Haste's fillings.... (Neil Swinton)

FRIDAY NIGHT FLYING

It's nearly that time of year again - Friday night flying starts on April 28th.

Those of you who have volunteered to help (thank you very much) should have had your crew details, if not here is a summary, and there is a copy posted in the club house. Please remember to find a stand-in if you can't make it.

If you didn't get round to volunteering earlier but now feel that you would really like to help on a Friday then don't be shy, come along and help you might actually enjoy yourselves.

There will be a **FREE BBQ** party on Easter Saturday, to give the new crews a chance to practice for the coming season. All members welcome!

Carole Shepherd

Editor's note: anyone who thinks that helping on Friday nights is a waste of time would presumably not mind their annual subscription being increased by £75 - this is the equivalent sum per flying member that we raised last year.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

6-13 May: Expedition to Feshie.

27, 28, 29 May: Inter Club League (ICL) at Hinton-in-the-Hedges.

3 June: Cris and Claire's wedding.

10, 11 June: ICL at Bicester.

17, 18 June: Talgarth weekend?

24 June: Dawn to Dusk flying.

24, 25 June: ICL at Shenington.

8, 9 July: ICL at Snitterfield.

29, 30 July: ICL at Bidford.

5, 6 August: ICL at Weston.

21-25 August: Cris Emson's cross country task week.

25 August: Third annual Christmas dinner (book in advance see Fiona)

26 Aug-3 Sept: Junior Nationals..

2 Sept: End of competition party.

30 Sept-7 Oct: Feshiebridge here we come (again).

Week	Date	Sunset	Crew	Group	Flights	BBQs
1	28 Apr	20:25	A	Lawrence Graham	15	0
2	5 May	20:36	B	Jenny Dobson & Friends	15	15
3	12 May	20:47	C	SMT	20	15
4	19 May	20:57	A	I A T	20	20
5	26 May	21:06	B	Vector Fields	25	20
6	2 Jun	21:13	C	Reserve	25	0
7	09 Jun	21:18	A	Colin Williams	25	20
8	16 Jun	21:21	B	Eynsham Badminton Club	25	25
9	23 Jun	21:22	C	RAL	25	0
10	30 Jun	21:20	A	KNET	25	25
11	7 Jul	21:15	B	Reserve	25	0
12	14 Jul	21:09	C	Bartholemew School	25	50
13	21 Jul	21:00	A	Brackley Rugby Club	25	25
14	28 Jul	20:49	B	Matt Gage	20	20
15	4 Aug	20:37	C	Barry Taylor	20	20
16	11 Aug	20:24	A	British Biotech	20	20
17	18 Aug	20:09	B	White Horse	15	15
18	25 Aug	19:54	C	JUNIOR NATIONALS	0	0
19	1 Sep	19:39	A	JUNIOR NATIONALS	0	0
20	8 Sep	19:23	B	Reserve	10	
21	15 Sep	19:07	C	Reserve	10	

Crew A: AIRFIELD: Dave Nisbet, Andy Butterfield, Neil Swinton, Nick Brooks, Peter Brooks, John Duvall, Garry Cuthill, Jamie Cuthill. FOOD: Janet Cuthill, Ursula Brooks, Robert Jackson, Matt Gage, Annette Shaw.

Crew B: AIRFIELD: Cris Emson, Martin Hastings, Martin Cooper, Nick Hill, Richard Carter, Chrissy Milner, Tony Hoskins, Steve McCurdy, Brian Green. FOOD: Sheila Evans, Karen King, Martin Cox, Joe Hoskins

Crew C: AIRFIELD: Howard Stone, John Hanlon, Martin Langford, Mick Moxon, Carole Shepherd, Ian Shepherd, Dave Weeks, Tim Charlesworth, Nicky Beresford, Henry Clark. FOOD: Lesley Wright, Alison Clark, Maz Makari, Roz Smith, Alan Charlesworth.

Reserves: Rachel Brewin, Simon Walker, Steve Trusler, Hilary Hastings, Fiona Buck, Phil Hawkins

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AND
GLIDING**
?

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SIMPLE SNAKE AND PYGMY

Snake (stewing beef, diced)

Pygmy (pigs kidney, sliced)

Red wine

Beef stock, gravy or stock cubes

Onion, salt, pepper & mixed herbs

Bay leaves (optional)

Wild fungi picked and dried at Feshiebridge (OK, OK, cheap button mushrooms from Tesco will do at a pinch)

Soak the snake in the wine for a few hours, then fry it until brown to seal in the juices. Throw into a stockpot. Do the same with the pygmies. Add the rest of the ingredients and cook for a long time very slowly.

Crewing when you're at Weston is easy - just enjoy your flying, and if someone lands out you get them - easy!

In a competition, you're away from base, and there are 3 dozen things that need doing - rigging, DI, cleaning, taping up, barograph, setting up cameras, briefing, marking the map, setting up the GPS, and all before you can get something to eat or go to the loo! Forget the retrieves, this is where a great crew can make a big difference. I reckon such a crew can add at least a couple of kph to the speed of the pilot simply by de-stressing him (or her).

So I'd like to thank Claudia, Janice and Matt for taking time out to join us, and all the others who did the same at the various regional

events (I won't name names - I don't want to miss anyone out). And while the competition is in progress, the crew can try out a new site, new gliders or even get checked off aerotows (well done Cloudy).

On day 3 of the Inter Club League Final last year, I was one of the crew, along with Janice and Matt. Once the grid has launched I thought, hmm, what do I do now? Well the Pilatus is ready to go, so I'll try the intermediate task (Nympsfield-Gaydon - Stoney Stratford - Nympsfield, 220k) and if conditions turn bad, I can easily return.

OK, I wasn't thinking straight, and at about 3pm I launched and headed northeast with a speedy 10kt tailwind. Cumulus and high climbs to Cheltenham, followed by blueness. I thought I could see Cu in the distance, and with 4500' and only half an hour into the flight, I thought I might as well go for it. It wasn't too bad in the blue either, so off I trundled.

HOW NOT TO CREW

by Maz

Round Gaydon, take the picture and head out towards Stoney. Something should have clicked by now, there were gliders in fields everywhere, but still I continued. Near Towester, the climbs dropped from 5kt to 4500' to 2kt to 3500' as the day began to die.

Finally rounding Stoney roundabout at about 4:45pm, took the picture, the GPS needle flicked over onto NYM, and showed something like 50 nautical miles to run into still blue conditions and that 10kt headwind. This isn't looking too clever now...

Over Buckingham, I came across Steve Veness, who was also finding it tough going. We found thermals for each other until near WOG, I was down to 2000', climbing to 2500' and losing any distance I'd made in the headwind. I radioed Steve and told him I was going into WOG. He would try to make Enstone. After a couple more abortive attempts to make progress I landed at about 5:30pm. Settling down for half an hour after landing, I got back in the Pilatus and flew it up to the Hangar.

This is where I found Haste, who, having just been retrieved by John Hanlon in EEN's trailer from near HB, wasn't too impressed to see his crew landing 50 miles away from where he should be.

Matt Gage was going to fetch Steve from Enstone. Janice would drive George's car and trailer back to Weston. George would drive my car and trailer back to Weston. We just had to fetch Haste's car and trailer from Nympsfield now...except there was no-one left to do it! As I was the guilty party here, we got a lift back to my place and picked up the Alfa.

Driving somewhat in excess of the speed limit, we arrived at Nympsfield at about 10pm. We paid for our aerotows, had a beer, picked up Haste's car and trailer and headed back to Weston. In the early hours of Tuesday morning, we arrived, had another beer and that was that; job done.

So, sorry for all the trouble I caused through my selfishness, but still I really enjoyed that flight, and in the same situation, would probably do the same again!

A SIMPLE SILVER C

After I'd finally done my 50km at the end of June, I filled in the green form, got the appropriate people to sign it, sent it to my German club for the German CFI to sign off the silver height and duration, both of which I had done in Germany several years ago, and sent the form to the BGA, together with the barograph traces, and a cheque of course.

Three weeks later I received a phone call from the BGA: They were really sorry but couldn't issue a Silver C badge, since they didn't recognize the German CFI's instructor number. The BGA apparently needed a letter from the German pilots' association, the DAeC, confirming the CFI's number and signature. Then they would be happy to issue the Silver C.

I phoned the DAeC. They were all very busy and most of them were at Bayreuth anyway, because it was the first week of the World Championships. Finally I got through to the person who is responsible for the gliding department of the DAeC. He

said I could just send him the 50km claim and he would send me a German Silver C badge. Then he realised that I'm not a full member of the German club anymore, so apparently that wasn't possible. He did, however, agree to send me a letter of confirmation. This was delayed by the World Championships and the fact that the DAeC moved office, but in mid-September I received the letter and sent it to the BGA straight away.

Then I waited. Two weeks. Three weeks. Four weeks. After five weeks I got another letter. This time the BGA had realised that I didn't have a gliding certificate which they could stamp with the cross-country endorsement (I had told them before that the only certificate I have is a German PPL-C) so they sent me a blue form which I had to fill in. Then Cris Emson had to confirm that I had done "a circuit, followed by a satisfactory landing" and that I'm familiar with the rules of the air.

Apparently the BGA can only issue a Silver C if the applicant has got a British "A" certificate so they can put the stamp on it. I thought the Silver C was

an international certificate, but apparently the BGA don't see it like that.

Oh yes, and I had to send them another cheque of course, this time for the certificate.

Great, I thought, I'm going to get the Silver C before the end of this millennium (for all the cleverclogs among you: I know it's not the end of the millennium yet! But who cares...)

And, guess what: Today (16th October) I received the gliding certificate!

Unfortunately not the Silver C though - but I've got a British A badge now. I'm very proud of it, it's my first - and only - British gliding badge!

Now I'm going to send the certificate back to the BGA. And who knows - maybe, maybe I'll really have the Silver C before the end of the year...

Claudia Biingen

(Happily, Claudia's Silver badge arrived a few days later - Ed)

Just in Time!

Alex Jenkins

Just In Time before leaving on my annual family holidays, Saturday 21 August promised the chance I had been waiting for throughout the previous 2 washed-out weeks.

10:30: Howard and Graham have set 360km to Bridgnorth and Chilbolton Radio Telescope. A bit daunting, partly because I haven't done a 300 for a couple of seasons, partly because I know I'm not going to get an early start, but mostly because I am what is technically known as a thermally-challenged soaring pilot. At least 251 is rigged and ready - *Just In Time*.

11:10: I'm welding my flexible friend casually at RD Aviation, hoping it's not too overstretched already. If only they opened at a sensible time on Saturday I could have gone there first and saved myself all this stress. I depart the proud owner of a new pair of Cloudmaster tinted bifocals and an overdraft.

11:55: '*Haste, what's the GPS code for Bridgnorth?*' Strapped in at the launch point I'm taking the *Just In Time* approach to task planning. After trying several feasible variations ... BRN BDN BRI... it's not in my GPS ... Haste offers me his own Garmin with the Bridgnorth TP loaded, but I politely decline. It looks too complicated.

12:30: Stuck in a scrappy climb-away I eventually find the rest of the gang (Howie in DMH, Phil Hawkins in 147 and Graham Barrett in 139) lurking on 130.125. Phil takes pity and tells me where they are. In bloody front as usual. Rather a long way in front.

Cautiously at first, I pick my way up the first leg. Circling doesn't work well - I make better progress by slowing down and S-turning under the best bits. After Edgehill things begin to improve. The dual carriageway from Redditch to Halesowen proves an easy line feature to keep on my right, pointing me towards Bridgnorth and keeping me out of the CTA.

13:30: '*It's a good turning point, the bridge over the river stands out really well*'. Graham on the radio to Howie. That's a bonus because I don't actually know where the TP is. The *Just In Time* principle works again!

The countryside below changes, more hills, more woods, smaller fields. Big wings are turning in the distance. The Duo Discus leaves to the north before me, but the lift is still there a mile west of the TP - perfect.

14:02: '251 Bridgnorth'. I can hear 139 and DMH on the radio - well into the long second leg down to Chilbolton (near Winchester). What's the GPS code? Must be CHL. Bang it in and check the readout - pretty close to my hastily estimated 160 degrees, no sweat. Ahead I hear tales of it starting to go blue, but here conditions are good.

To the west the hills roll away into Wales, ahead the Severn glistens below as it winds south towards Worcester and the Malverns. The late summer countryside glows harvest gold and green below. It reminds me that all the frustration, expense, time and effort spent hanging around cold airfields and draughty hangars over the years, are worth it.

Beyond Worcester it's getting blue. After a cloud near Pershore, I have a long glide to Cheltenham where circling birds indicate another climb - BEEP BEEP BEEP! What's that? The GPS shows 'approaching CHL'. Damn! CHL must be Cheltenham!

'DMH, what's the GPS code for Chilbolton?' He tells me it's CBN. Only another 48 miles to the TP.

Squeezing between Brize Norton and Lincham zones I hear 147 and DMH worrying about blue conditions on the final leg. I consider running for home - but towards Andover there are still some clouds and I press on, accepting I'll probably land out. Near Rivar Hill there are lots of gliders close together flying east-west tracks, presumably a competition task. I resort to a weak thermal over Andover, then a good cloud just beyond the TP beckons.

16:33: '251 Turning Chilbolton'. I've climbed to just over 5000ft under that cloud on the edge of Solent CTA. Ahead there's a single flat cloud in an empty sky. The GPS says 42 miles to run (I actually know the code for Weston). Even ignoring the headwind that's 17 miles short. Survival mode I think.

'DMH changing channels for final glide to Weston' says Howie. Feeling lonely, I follow suit. Immediately my ears are deluged with the Lasham finish line. The sky over Basingstoke is thick with expensive glass flying at Vne. Glad I'm not there.

I seem to be doing OK, stretching the glide to the limit, flying zero McCready and slowing down in any favourable air. Over Newbury I find a one knot climb which hoists me to about

3500 before dying out. Perhaps I can get as far as Abingdon.

17:15: Brian (who lives just south of Didcot) is calling to ask where his glider is. 'I've been watching gliders - AERE Harwell has been kicking off thermals all afternoon'. If I could get there above the 2500ft limit, that might be useful. But after Newbury there is only sink.

I'm looking for likely ground sources as the height trickles away. Below me the north-easterly wind is blowing over the Berkshire downs, so there's not going to be any significant hill-induced thermal until I cross the north facing slope by Harwell. How about 'wind-shadow' thermals? Prevailing wind blowing over relief on the ground should leave some areas of relatively undisturbed air which heat up better than exposed areas and are thermal sources. That's the theory!

There's a south-east facing dry valley in the downs with a small bowl enclosing the village of West Ilsley at its head - from 1800ft I can see it clearly to my right - well sheltered in today's wind direction. And it works - sort of - gently getting me about 800 more feet.

Abingdon is now in easy reach but I will definitely try Didcot first. YES! Excitement as the vario shows a sharp increase in the sink rate to over three knots down. With this much sink about at this time of day there must be a thermal here too. But I can't find it. I keep searching around but this is costing me too much height for nothing. I'm gutted - I was sure I'd get final glide from here.

17:40: 1200 feet approaching Abingdon. The wind is inconveniently between the two main runway directions, but it looks like nothing is happening. Keeping clear of the circuit I move off to the east over the A34 and find some zero coming off the retail parks. Ever so slowly this turns to half a knot then almost a knot. *Just In Time* again!

Right this is it - all or nothing. I'm tired and fed up and I want a final glide or I'm landing here on a nice safe runway. The John Willy says I need a bit over 3000ft to be in with a safe margin. Twice I drift a mile or so, straighten and fly back upwind in zero and weak lift. Doing this twice over gets me enough to spare for a low pass over the Weston trailer park in celebration.

18:14: 'Good finish 251'. Ian Shepherd's ironic comment from the launch point radio greets my long overdue return. 'Did you get round? We thought you'd crapped out' say the others, by now well ensconced in the bar. 'How the hell did you get back from Chilbolton?'.

Well....*Just In Time* for you to buy me a pint, actually.

WELCOME TO MY WORLD

continued from inside front cover

made the profound announcement – just turn round! With a 10 metre trailer on the back! And then "Follow the signs to Arras – but DO NOT take the Arras road!".

Have you noticed that when anyone starts to talk on a mobile phone, the conversation always goes: "Where are you?", followed a few seconds later by "Can you hear me?". Well we had a lot of that. It was always the same – "Motorway Yes, can you hear ME? ..." It got a bit repetitive really. I am looking forward to the day I can answer my mobile phone in a lift, and no matter what is asked, give the following answers, watching the reaction on the others in the lift as they try to reconstruct the full conversation:

"Hello....in a lift ... (looking around)... Four."

Who cares where you are? The only reason I mention this is to explain to Haste who phoned us, to get Carole answering with the conversation: "Hello...on the M40" at which point the rest of us (without prompting) shouted in unison "FOUR." Carole completely cracked up, and was unable to speak for 5 minutes.

So after an eventful 4 days, we finally got back to the Club on Sunday morning, and rigged our brand new glider, to the "Oohs" and "Aahs" of the club members.

INTERNET ROUND-UP

The OGC List Server (see page 6) is a useful source of little anecdotes and snippets of information, which may or may not be directly associated with the Club or with aviation in general, as this selection shows:

I hear a group from the club managed to bluff their way to Branson's party on Saturday night. I hope you all enjoyed yourselves, sorry I didn't see you there. It was nice to see Paul and Tony on Sunday, and you'll both be pleased to know I made it to the house, unfortunately I never got a go in the canoes.

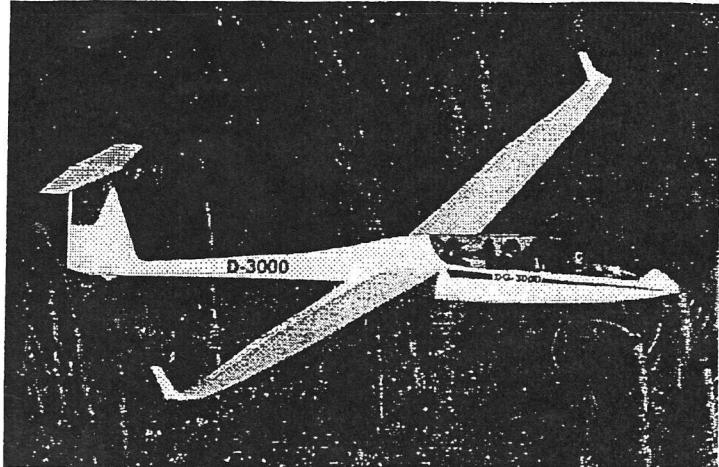
...ever, I did meet Ruby Wax, and I got a very dodgy caricature! (Emma Cuthill).

From "Pilot" magazine: this little snippet in the (normally depressing) incident section made me chuckle: "Two identical aircraft belonging to the same operator were parked on adjacent stands at Norwich airport. Both had uneventful flights, one to Palma and one to Ibiza. Each was carrying the other's baggage." (Neil Swinton).

Found a good site for weather pictures and it's FREE: www.sunsite.org.uk/weather/images/uk (Neil Turner - the Busman)

I've just received my BGA Gliding Certificate. It's a funny little booklet. These pleas for fair treatment of the owner I find particularly interesting. The German one is very old-fashioned and sounds like it was written by someone who lived at the time of Oskar Ursinus. Or Robert Kronfeld. Probably even before that. (Claudia)

Overall - a very enjoyable trip. Lessons to be learnt – take people who reside in the same world and having the same sense of reality, and take 3 copies of each book. The C-Team are pleased to announce they are now officially available for glider collection anywhere in Europe. A few of us for example are clubbing together to buy the new DG3000 (pictured here) due out on 1st April.



And by the way, the cushions did not fit! Perhaps we could just pop back and pick them up...?

Cris Emson

On Sunday I went to the Model show at RAF Halton. All the normal stuff with toy trains, toy cars, toy soldiers as well as model aircraft. The most impressive sight was the number of jet powered aircraft, they had a number of F20-somethings (twin fin, twin jets, swept wings) and a lovely 1/4 scale ME262. They really are powered by little jet engines, costing about £15,000 each. Gulp. The noise was brilliant, starting up on the ground really sounded exactly like an airliner, and while they were not quiet, the noise was much less objectionable than a typical screaming model internal combustion engine. (Neil Swinton)

Concerning the Genesis (see back cover - Ed), it did not really spin and had no vices. A very safe glider. The rudder was adequate, both for small aileron inputs, and for full deflection.

At my weight it wanted to thermal at 45 knots minimum - 48 was better - and of course it would be even higher with water (it can take 190 litres!) Max pilot weight was also high - about 250 lb.

I think the pitching movement at takeoff would have been less of a problem if we had not listened too much to the briefing, but treated it as any nose-heavy glider. It also flies fast very efficiently, or so it seemed. 100 knots seemed to produce no great drag, and it all came back to height on pulling up. Very impressive.

Most pilots enjoyed it, and I would be interested, if only it had a decent winch hook. I am not at all sure about a 2 point winch connection though. (Cris Emson).

Copied from aviators network news page, issue 1642, Tuesday 23 November 1999. A glider pilot had deliberately blocked his forward vision when his aircraft collided with another 600ft over the Derbyshire Peaks, an inquest at Glossop, Derbyshire heard yesterday.

Three people died in the accident which was partly caused by the experiment being carried out by Stephen Robertshaw, a fully rated instructor, the coroner was told. Mr Robertshaw, 40, from Heaton Mersey, Manchester, had told friends he planned to use a "hood" of pink cloth stretched between his baseball cap and the control panel, to test his ability to fly by instruments alone.

A fellow member of the Derbyshire and Lancashire Flying Club, David Salmon, described it as a Heath Robinson affair. Because of the presence of the hood, both Mr Robertshaw and his passenger, Caroline Roberts, 36, failed to see the other glider approaching. It was being flown by Brian Curran, 47, of Hale, Cheshire. Had he been told of the "foolhardy" experiment, he might have been keeping a better lookout, said Wg Cdr Jack Alcock, who investigated the crash for the Environment Department. Verdicts of accidental death were recorded on all three. (found by Neil Swinton).

A quick "thanks" to Nicky Beresford, Annette Shaw and Steve Trusler who used email to notify me about changes to their telephone numbers or addresses. Nick Hill's address list has been updated accordingly.

Editor

Fusel Glide

The Americans are not well known for producing world beating sailplanes. At a time when the German manufacturers were experimenting with GRP construction for load-bearing assemblies, the major American producer 'Schweizer' had stuck firmly to all metal construction. They had believed (like Slingsby's) that GRP would never be usable for the structural parts of an aircraft since it was simply too flexible.

Slingsby had stuck to wooden construction and then had finally followed the American route by experimenting with metal built gliders such as the T-53. The Germans then proved them both wrong and began production of first wood/glass composite gliders such as the Pheobus and then finally pure glassfibre gliders. These aircraft could be manufactured cheaper, using less skilled staff than metal aircraft, and of course offered increased performance.

As a consequence, series glider production in the USA had finished in about 1980 with the Schweizer 1-36, Slingsby 'going up in smoke' some years before that. So, nearly twenty years after the 1-36, America produces the Genesis. Is it a world beating sailplane?

Nick Hill had very kindly arranged for the club to get the loan of the aircraft over one weekend. Things that weekend didn't start well with firstly an RAF shutdown all day Saturday, and then the realisation that the Genesis didn't have a winch hook and could only be aerotowed. Anyway it rained on Saturday, so we took it to Bicester, rigged it and then went home, ready for Sunday.

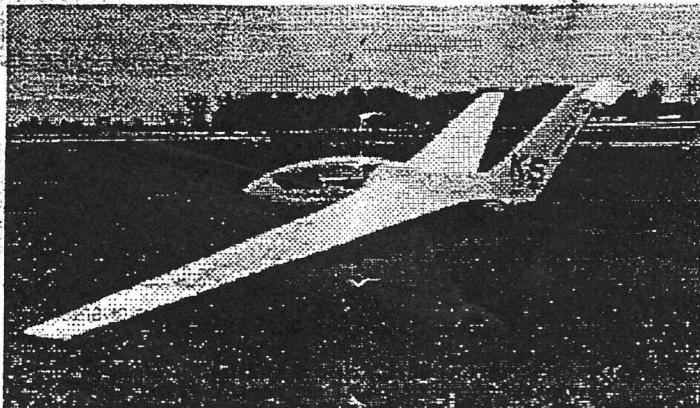
The single seat Genesis is a radical design that has done away with the normal glider configuration of a long fuselage with a big wing at the front and a small wing at the back. Instead, it has a short fuselage with a big wing in the middle. The fuselage looks normal until just after the wing trailing edge. At this point it narrows to form the swept fin and rudder. A small elevator is mounted on the top of the fin.

Although designed in the USA, the aircraft is built in Lithuania with the finish, detailing and wing profile to a very high standard. Rigging was performed 'on the trailer' and proved easy for two people with a light wing, although the wing was fitted very low to the fuselage and required an awkward bend of the back. The controls connected automatically. The wings had normal Schemp-Hirth water ballast connections.

Once rigged the glider showed pronounced

sweep forward of the wing, and also a very large wing chord at the root. The wing section looks remarkably normal. I had expected to see a large amount of reflex (concave) curvature on the upper surface, but the amount of reflex was very small. The undersurface was all convex. Right at the tip the section changed to what appeared to be symmetrical section.

The GENESIS



The ailerons were in two sections, the main section was inboard and operated as normal. The smaller-outboard section moved up only and was geared about 3-4 times greater than the main aileron. This gave the effect of a drag spoiler on the inside wing of a turn and reduced the adverse yaw effect. Large double paddle airbrakes were fitted to the wing top surfaces.

A small hinged hatch behind the cockpit showed the location of the ballistic recovery parachute, although not fitted to this model. As mentioned above, the Genesis doesn't have any winch hooks yet. It is planned to fit two hooks, one either side of the wing root at about the wing centre of pressure. A special 'Y' shaped strap is then required.

This is the arrangement that some other flying wing gliders use, for example the Fauvel Av-36 'Budgie' that used to be based at Bicester and is now at Halton. I guess you just hope that both hooks release at the same time!

Wartime troop carrying gliders like the 'Horsa' used to be aerotowed with a 'Y' rope going to two attachment points on the wing leading edges. This gave the very stable tow which was needed when doing long aerotows (6 hours plus) and even tows at night and in cloud. In very poor visibility the pilots kept position behind the tugs by using an 'angle of dangle' indicator that showed the angle of the towropes to the glider. Very brave men. Let's get back to the Genesis.

The undercarriage comprised of a very large main wheel, and a smaller nose wheel, both wheels being retractable and both being well

sprung. At rest with the cockpit empty the Genesis sat on its tail, with the nose pointing some 40 degrees upwards and looking most odd. With a pilot on board the aircraft sat very firmly on the main and nose wheel. The cockpit layout was entirely conventional and even larger than an Astir.

The side-to-side movement of the large stick did seem excessive, but there was ample room at the side to avoid fouling your knees with the stick. The view all round was good.

Before flying a very trusting Robert [redacted] (the aircraft owner) briefed everybody about the glider handling. "Nothing unusual" he said. "It drops the right wing at the stall, won't stay in a spin and keep the nosewheel on the ground during the take off run". He was right, except the part about keeping the nosewheel on the ground. Getting the nosewheel off the ground as soon as possible worked well for me, others suffered a very 'pitchy' aerotow take-off run.

Some people found the lateral control very poor both on and off the aerotow, this considerably improved, however when the wheels were retracted.

Rudder was surprisingly powerful and the Genesis could be held in a steep sideslip. The elevator was a little frisky, but no worse than a K6 or Cirrus. The glider was also 'hands off' stable, something that the K6 and Cirrus certainly are not. The glider flew well at speed, the Vne being in excess of 130 kts.

At low speeds the glider very gently dropped into a mushing stall with the ailerons still effective. A more energetic stall dropped both the nose and the right wing. The braver [redacted] (not me) tried to spin. They reported that [redacted] out after 3/4 of a turn. A normal circuit was flown at 'glass' speeds, the airbrakes proved reasonable but not spectacular, and they did generate a marked nose-up pitch.

At touchdown it is not possible to land on main wheel and tailskid together, so the glider is held in the landing attitude and you touch down on the main wheel only. As soon as the brake is applied the glider gently pitches forwards onto the nose wheel, however since both wheels are sprung, the whole landing becomes very flattering and smooth.

I liked it. In performance terms the Genesis is rumoured to be up with a Discus and it handled at least as well as a Cirrus. I did in fact offer to swap the Cirrus for the Genesis but Robert declined. Group Genesis have sold 16 production aircraft on the USA but I don't think any yet in Europe.

Neil Swinton