



FINAL GLIDE

Clubhouse: 0845 0945265
 Launch point: 07836 773210
 Editor: 07876 346306
 Claudia@Buengen.co.uk

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Edited by Claudia B. Hill

A VISIT TO FLIEGERCLUB SCHÖNHAGEN

Jon Christensen (introduction by Claudia Hill, photos by Eckhard Peter and Jon C)

On the weekend of 12th and 13th November 2011 Jon Christensen visited the Fliegerclub Schönhagen, a gliding club near Berlin that had contacted OGC early in 2010 with the aim to establish a twinning arrangement.

Twinning used to be all the rage in Germany, presumably in the olden days based on the assumption that if you know people in other countries and understand their culture you are less likely to wage war against them. While travel across borders has become a lot easier with cheap modes of transport and the Schengen agreement, there is still a lot to be said for the concept of twinning.

You already have points of contact; you don't arrive as a tourist, but as a friend. Having a network of like-minded people (e.g. glider pilots) from various countries broadens one's horizon and can come in very handy

- those who have taken part in Vintage Rallies and been invited to stop at random gliding sites en route will probably agree. Both OGC and the Fliegerclub Schönhagen are in attractive locations – OGC is near Oxford, a popular tourist destination, and Schönhagen is almost within spitting distance of Berlin – I don't think Berlin needs an introduction, and I shall certainly try to spend an extended weekend there next year.



Also in this issue:

CLUB LADDER + INTER CLUB LEAGUE	2
MINCEMEAT SLICES	4
WHAT A YEAR IT'S BEEN.....	5
CFI'S REPORT	6
THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER.....	7
WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE	9
SIR PAUL NURSE (OUR NEW PRESIDENT)	10
TREASURER'S REPORT	11
2011 IN A NUTSHELL.....	14
ON THE NORTHERN FRINGES.....	16
DAISY WALTZED THE BLUE DANUBE	19
FRIDAY NIGHT IMPRESSIONS	21

CLUB LADDER + INTER CLUB LEAGUE*Nick Hill*

As in previous years, weather permitting, OGC members have set off to explore the countryside and go cross-country. Whilst some set off to explore new sights and picturesque locations others aim for the fastest speed or farthest distance compared to anyone else on the day. On their return they happily record the details of their flights for all to see and to compare with others both in OGC and amongst the wider UK gliding community.

The simplest method to allow these comparisons is to enter the flights on the UK gliding ladder web site (<http://www.bgaladder.co.uk>) which assigns scores to flights and presents the results in a variety of local and nation ladder tables.

The first is the Open Ladder for flights made by club members from any site on any day of the week. The second is restricted to flights made at the weekend. The results of these ladders for OGC members are presented in the two tables. In both cases only the six highest scoring flights are included on the ladder.

OGC Open Ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Richard Hall	2392	2303	2220	2156	2099	2024	13194
Paul Smith	2151	1844	1809	1799	1495	1456	10554
Claudia Hill	2304	2016	1997	1534	1297	1141	10289
Martin Hastings	2221	1922	1643	1479	1178	1002	9445
Paul Morrison	1622	1531	1092	990	456		5691
Andrew Butterfield	1985	1498	1416	700			5599
Phil Hawkins	1995						1995
Graham Barrett	1950						1950
Jon Christensen	1240	511					1751
Gordon Craig	1708						1708

OGC Weekend Ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Claudia Hill	2304	1997	1534	1297	903	865	8900
Paul Smith	1844	1799	1456	1311	640	409	7459
Richard Hall	2156	2016	1851				6023
Andrew Butterfield	1985	1498					3483
Paul Morrison	1622	1092	456				3170
Graham Barrett	1950						1950
Martin Hastings	1922						1922
Gordon Craig	1708						1708
Jon Christensen	511						511

In order to encourage cross-country flying from Weston for 2012 a new local ladder will be introduced which will be restricted to flights made from Weston only. When entering flights on the BGA ladder site it is now possible to indicate that a flight should be included in the ladder "OGC WOG flights only" for a flight made from Weston. So next year we will be able to report on the Open, Weekend and WOG only ladders.

Inter Club League

OGC did not take part in the inter-club league this year. The other local clubs we compete against in the ICL are keen to see us back in the competition next year. In fact the new Bidford club is keen to take part next year so with OGC that would make five clubs in the local league.

If anyone is interested in organising the OGC involvement in the ICL then please talk to Nick Hill about what is involved.

A visit to Fliegerclub Schönhagen

(contd. – Jon's letter to FC Schönhagen)

Hello friends!

I would like to say a huge personal thank you to everyone for the very warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to me during my recent visit to Berlin and Fliegerclub Schoenhagen.

I had so many wonderful experiences during my visit. It started on a high when several of you welcomed me at dinner and I was able to taste a St Martins day goose.

Over the weekend your warm welcome continued. I very much enjoyed exploring your club and airfield, and the English/German bunting certainly put a smile on my face. I really appreciate you going out of your way to allow me the opportunity to glide over the local area in a Bocian, and then fly a powered aircraft further afield to view the sights of Berlin from the air. I really can't express how much I enjoyed all of this. When I returned to your club house to find mulled wine and cake being served, it completed a perfect day.

The following day my overall visit also ended on a high, being taken on a great tour around the most famous places in Berlin.

I will share my experiences with all at my club, the Oxford Gliding Club, and encourage them to visit if they have the opportunity.

It is the individuals that make a club, and I enjoyed meeting each and every one of you. Our two clubs are more alike than you can imagine.

You are all very welcome to visit us; I hope that you will have the opportunity to do so at some point. Be assured of a warm welcome, I know you will be made to feel not just a visitor, but part of our club.

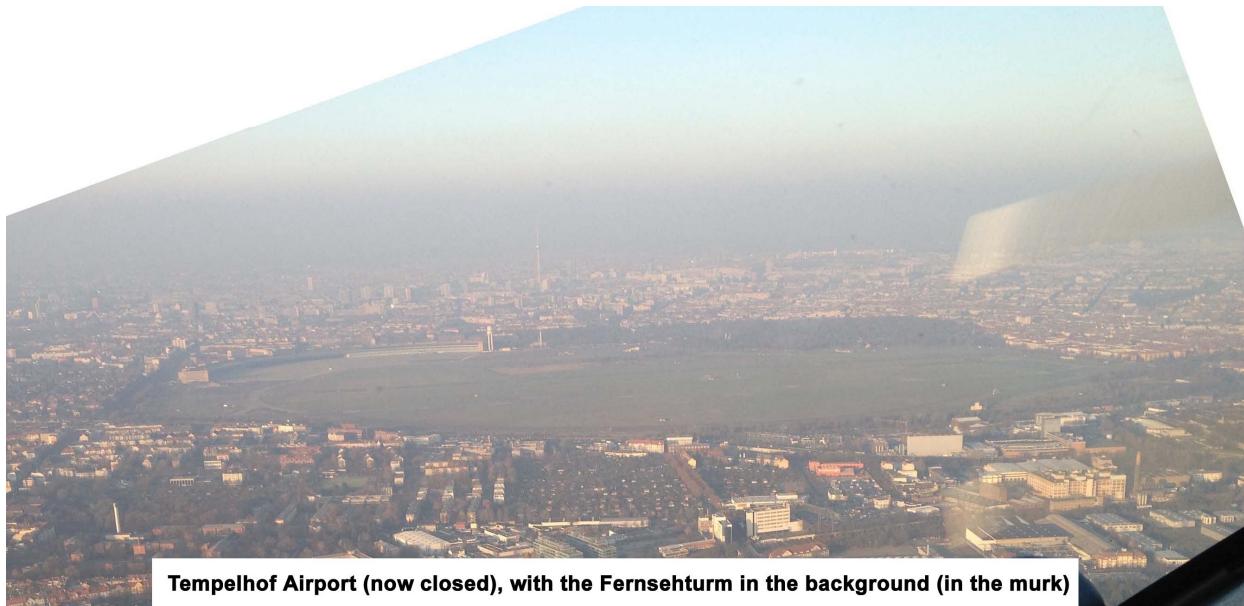
A sincere thanks once again. I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Jon Christensen
Oxford Gliding Club



A visit to Fliegerclub Schönhagen

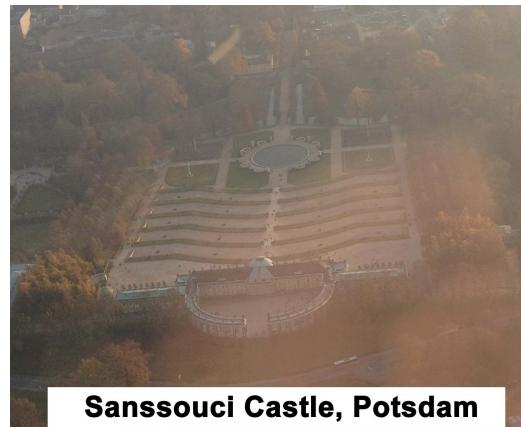
(contd. – Jon's sightseeing flight over Berlin)



Tempelhof Airport (now closed), with the Fernsehturm in the background (in the murk)



Neues Palais Potsdam



Sanssouci Castle, Potsdam

MINCEMEAT SLICES

(Fiona Hawkins)

- 8oz brown flour
- 4oz oats
- 6oz margarine
- 3oz brown sugar
- 1/2 a pot of mincemeat

1. Melt margarine and sugar
2. Stir in flour and oats
3. Divide in half and press half the oat mix into the bottom of a swiss roll tin.
4. Spread over a layer of mincemeat
5. Cover with the rest of the oat mix
6. Bake gas 5 / 190°C for 20 minutes until golden brown

Store in an airtight tin
probably best eaten within 2 weeks

WHAT A YEAR IT'S BEEN...

Phil Pratley



Photo: Paul Smith

What a year it's been, frustrating but fun, allow me to elaborate!

Back in January I asked myself "will I be able to achieve my bronze endorsement this year?", Well, I thought, nothing ventured, nothing gained as they say, so let's give it a go.

So what did I think would be my biggest hurdle? Well, to me it was going to be the two half hour soaring flights, up to now I hadn't been that close, even the new solo pilots were staying airborne longer than I could manage, the harder I tried the more elusive it became, this is when the frustration kicked in.

Then, one Sunday I'm staying aloft, I must be there? I must be? I'm getting low now, must land, I climb out of the glider and run to the bus, look at the log, 28 minutes, Arrrrrgh not enough.

A few weeks later I take a launch into some weak lift, is it enough? Will it be another 28 minutes? I stay up as long as I can, it doesn't seem that much and I have to land.

I'm not going to look at the log, I daren't, but after a while curiosity got the better of me, I take a peek, 30 minutes, No, I don't believe it, it must be a mistake, I look again, it really is 30 minutes, I've

got my first half hour under my belt, WOW! "If I can do that again" I thought, all I need to do is sit the exam and a bit of flying with an instructor and I'm there.

However, it was going to take another 28 minute flight in late July before I could achieve my second half hour, and that happened on 14th August, I came off the wire straight into a thermal, I managed to stay with it, drifting way out of my comfort zone (50ft off the airfield) way past the A34/M40 roundabout, but I'm still climbing. I'm at 3000ft and the glide angle looks good, so I stay with it, I drift a bit further, starting to worry now, what if I hit sink, will I make it back?, so I leave the lift and head back towards the airfield, straight into more lift, hey this is great! I fly around a while longer then decide to land, but each time I set up for landing circuit I find lift, so I ignore it and turn the vario down and land, I go and check my time, 60 minutes, a whole hour. What had I been doing wrong weeks earlier? Nothing, I guess, It's the luck of the draw , you either connect with lift, or you don't. in my case I didn't.

Anyway, I now have both half hour soaring flights. Now for the exam, so one Saturday Liisi and myself (thanks for the help Liisi) sat the test paper and succeeded in satisfying the CFI that we were worthy of his signature on the bronze application which was duly sent off, and the rest as they say, is history, as I said at the beginning – frustrating (at times) but FUN, I wouldn't change it for the world!



Photo: Jeanfre Fachon

What next? Well, I guess it will be the cross country endorsement, maybe not this year but certainly early next year, I would also like to learn aerobatics... are you reading this... Andy... Stewart...?

CFI'S REPORT

John Hanlon



Photo: Paul Smith

Well, another year is nearing an end, and for me it's the second year as CFI, firstly thanks to all for on the most part behaving yourselves and not having any incidents!

This year, we have enjoyed for the last few months having the airfield to ourselves baring the occasional military drop following the demise of Skydive Weston... it has been a real advantage being able to operate without a drop zone affording us no delays in launching (well only self-inflicted delays now affect us!) and the ability to turn either way at the top of the launch affording us greater soaring opportunities (I know I have got away on a number of occasions that would not be the case if the drop zone was still there!)... What the future holds, we will have to wait and see, but next year there is a distinct possibility of an RAF parachute operation being re-formed! Rest assured, I and the committee will be doing everything we can to minimise the impact on our operation if this happens!

By now the third expedition to Talgarth will have taken place, sadly for me this time, work conspired against me and prevented me from going until the last weekend and I ended up toiling away in Herne Bay High School rather than soaring to dizzy heights in autumnal wave! Tuesday 4th October, and I see Chairman Paul has already reached FL95 from his comments on Facebook... the highest I've been this week is 6 metres in a scissor lift! GRRRRRR!

On the Instructor front, I am pleased to welcome Cecilia Craig to the team as a BI, we have lost Baby Dave Bray temporarily but he will be back as soon as his employment settles down! Next year should also see Richard Hall rejoining the team... some of you will not know Richard, but Richard was CFI when I first started gliding in 1983 and was my CFI from the start through to me becoming a full rated instructor. It will be great to have him back! And I urge all of you to make the most of him returning as I am sure he still has lots to offer!

Of course a really big thanks goes to all the instructors for their efforts throughout the year as always!

Over the winter months, I intend to do a fair bit of instructor training flying; on these days, the DG will need to be used in addition to the K13's to minimise impact on the club operation, but it is necessary to prepare some for completion courses and full rating tests that will take place early next year!

OGC did not enter the Interclub League this year, this was because Nick Hill who had been team captain for many years (and a great job he did) decided to stand down this year. With the absence of a team captain and no-one coming forward to take over, the ICL could not happen, so if there is anyone that would be interested in taking up the post, please speak to Nick for guidance. It would be great to be able to enter ICL next year! In the meantime... a really big thanks to Nick for his efforts over the years!

Well that's about it from me, so wishing you all a Happy Soaring 2012... And Let's keep it SAFE out there!



Photo: Jeanfre Fachon

THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER...

Paul Morrison



Photo: Paul Smith

As Christmas and the end of the year loom large on the horizon, it's customary for thoughts to turn to family, loved ones and close friends and for there to be a degree of introspection as we reflect on what 2011 has meant to all of us.

Like all families, OGC has seen some changes and challenges during this past year bought about at least in part by the current economic climate. I don't intend to dwell on the financial details too much as there is an article elsewhere in this edition of Final Glide which will consider this in much more detail, but suffice it to say I think all will agree that we have all seen our disposable income diminish as a result. A couple of years ago I commented that new gliding club members were typically 'cash rich' but 'time poor'. Alas those same members can now best be described as cash and time poor as more and more demands are made upon us by employers and our families.

If you were at the AGM you will have heard the Treasurer and I speak of the financial challenges we face and if you forgot every other part of our fantastically witty and enthralling reports, please remember one thing – our fixed costs outweigh our fixed income two to one. I will say that again – our fixed costs outweigh our fixed income **two to one**. As the Committee elected by you to manage and ensure the continued existence of the Club, this does present us with some challenges and we have had to take steps to reduce these costs, but there are limited measures we can implement. Some of our biggest fixed costs are rent and insurance and whilst we have managed to reduce the later by for example, changing the way that Daisy is insured and syndicating Astir DKR, there is little we can do to reduce other costs. It will come as no surprise to any of you that the cost of diesel for example has increased significantly despite a recent very competitive contract renegotiation.

So where does this leave us? Financially, the club is on a sound footing, but if we are to save for a rainy

day and to be able to grow and modernise the club as we would like, we need to increase the funds we realise at the end of each year. Thankfully we had a good 'Flying Two Weeks' this year and this turned what would have been a loss when depreciation is taken into account into a positive outcome. So where am I going with this? Basically, we are completely reliant upon the income that we receive from members, both in subscription and flying fees so unless we can persuade you all to fly and thus spend more, against a background of increasing costs we need more members to stand still or grow.

The Committee are actively considering opportunities to raise the Club's profile and recruit new members and you will no doubt recall that the Club had a presence at the Abingdon Air Show earlier this year and latterly at the Kidlington 'Fly To The Past' airshow. To those members who gave their time to take part in either of these shows I say thank you and to those members who are reading my meanderings for the first time as a result of these shows, I say a very warm welcome to the family that is Oxford Gliding Club.

We are considering some other exciting opportunities for 2012 but as always, we need to balance the cost and impact on the existing membership against the benefits that this may bring. Some other neighbouring clubs are fortunate to have dedicated marketing sub committees and marketing professionals amongst their membership dedicated to this task so if any of our you reading this have any skills in this area or are keen to help or have any ideas as to how we can increase membership, please speak to any Committee member and get involved.

I had considered sub-titling this column; '*What are they doing about it?*' but this question and sentiment is valid. I have consciously referred to OGC several times as a family and this is genuinely how I feel about the club. We may not always see eye to eye and like any family it has its ups and downs from time to time but please remember that unlike some other neighbouring clubs there are no paid staff here – it is a club run by the members for the members. All of us, including those that you have elected onto the Committee are volunteers doing the best that they can in the limited free time that they have available. We are not perfect and we recognise that sometimes things could perhaps have been done better, but it is always with the Club's best interests at heart. With this in mind, maybe the question I should have asked is '*What have you done for the Club this year?*'

OGC flies only as a result of the efforts of its members. Please consider that for one person to get into the air at any one time requires a minimum of three other members helping out (balancing the wing-tip on tyres is not an approved BGA launch method!) and this is before you consider the others that have maintained the glider and ground

The Chairman's Corner (contd.)

equipment, paid the rent for the airfield or ensured that there is diesel and LPG available. If your only contact with the club therefore is to turn up and fly and perhaps mutter that you're surprised that 'they' haven't done so and so yet, please stop and ask yourself, could I do more?

Some jobs around the Club do require an element of specialist skill and competence, but there are many where an extra set of hands, however inexperienced or unskilled, will be welcome so please don't be shy – get involved. Jon Christensen has now implemented an excellent online database of jobs around the club that need doing and these range in complexity from a bit of painting here and there to specific ground equipment maintenance tasks. He'd be delighted to show you where this is kept and how you can help on the next rainy day or when we have to pack up early as the result of Liz wanting to 'borrow' her airfield. It's an old adage that many hands make light work and never has this been truer here as sadly one of the overriding impressions I have of 2011 is that fewer and fewer club members are having to bear an ever increasing burden of the day to day tasks that keep OGC flying.

So what else has 2011 bought us? Looking back there have been some quite significant changes and sadly some longstanding members have chosen to step back and take a well deserved break from posts they have held for a long time. As mentioned at the AGM, it would be remiss of me not to take the opportunity here to express the Club's grateful thanks to Neil Turner for his many years of tireless devotion to keeping the ground equipment running virtually single handed and to Garry and Janet for their years of being the friendly and welcoming voice at the end of the Trial Flight booking line. Trial Flights and Mini Course 'punters' – a valuable source of income to the Club do not just magically appear at the launch point on a Saturday or Sunday, they take a lot of organising, usually during weekdays and evenings after a hard day at work. My thanks, both personally and on behalf of the club, to you for all that you have done.

Of course no précis of 2011 would be complete without mentioning the sad departure of our erstwhile and 'incomprehensible Frenchman' Jeanfre Fachon who has now moved to Germany. We marked his departure in traditional OGC style with lashings of

'En-tente Cordiale' and we very much hope to see Jeanfre back at OGC from time to time.

Keeping the 'Euro' theme going, you may recall that last year we welcomed two members of our sister club 'Fliegerclub Schönhagen' to OGC. Sadly, for various reasons the planned OGC club visit earlier this year to their club did not happen, but Jon Christensen has recently returned from a weekend there where he was made very welcome. I hope to visit the club sometime in 2012 and I would urge you to do the same if you get the chance. We also hope to see some of their members return to OGC next year.

A little bit closer to home but arguably almost as difficult to converse with the locals has been OGC's visits this year to the Black Mountains Gliding Club at Talgarth. A large party from OGC visited the site in May where we had excellent flying and YouTube videos as a result and a slightly smaller party made a return visit in October where although the weather was not as kind, a good time was had by all. The

first 'invasion' of 2012 is planned for early June and places are limited, so if you are interested in coming along, please get your names on the list asap.

Other notable happenings sadly include the departure of our friends from Skydive Weston this year. As it stands, I think it is unlikely that we will see the return of a 'Skydive Weston type' civilian club anytime soon, although there are rumours that a military run weekend club may come into



Photo: Paul Smith

being in spring next year. Whether this happens or what impact this will have, if any, on OGC's operations remain to be seen, but I am encouraged by the news that if it does start operating, it is likely to be under the control of RAF personnel very familiar with OGC's operations. As regards the weekday JSAT courses, my understanding is that the RAF will be issuing a European wide 'Invitation To Tender' early in 2012 for a pilot and aircraft. So on the assumption that the lowest bidder will win, we

The Chairman's Corner (contd.)

may see a return of the mad Hungarian and his Turbolet! Keep a good lookout folks!

It is all too easy when trying to write a retrospective such as this to dwell on the problems and challenges we have faced and continue to do so, but we should not forget that OGC remains a great place to fly with the best bunch of members that I am proud to call friends and colleagues. As I write this a few of us have just completed the first RT Licence Course that has been run at OGC for many years in a comfortable briefing room that at this time last year, was full of clutter and virtually unusable. This is only one of the many improvements that have taken place this year and again my thanks to those whose time and hard work have made it possible.

Looking towards 2012 I am confident that we will continue to see the Club thrive and grow and I hope that this column has perhaps inspired you to want to be part of this journey and to get involved in the Club in ways that maybe you have never considered before. Next year several of us will have been on the Committee for a number of years and perhaps it will be a new Chairman writing this column?

I look forward to flying with you in 2012 and all that remains is for me to take the opportunity to thank all of you for making OGC the great club that it is and to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a happy and thermic 2012.

WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Claudia Hill



Photo: Paul Smith

Chairman Paul's mention of the briefing room reminded me of the women's development meeting – which took place at Weston-on-the-Green in February and was the trigger for turning the briefing room into a usable space.

Liz Sparrow, who flies a Cirrus (previously owned by Phil Hawkins, incidentally) and is part of the British

Women's Team, started a women's development programme approx. 5 years ago, to encourage more women to fly in comps, and ideally eventually find talented female pilots for the British team.

I have thought about whether this kind of positive discrimination is appropriate in gliding, and of course you could say that as gliding is not dependent on physical strength there should not be any separate activity for female glider pilots. I agree to a certain extent, and I like the fact that at OGC (unlike some other clubs) I'm not treated as anything special just because I'm female, instead I just feel like one of the pilots.

However, in a community which is still very male-dominated a bit of positive discrimination may be needed to encourage women to progress with their flying.

Anyway, Liz and a team of helpers (British team members – men and women – and other volunteers) have organised a variety of things over the past 5 years, and those certainly encouraged me to fly my first Regionals in 2006, and my first Nationals in 2010:

- In February there's normally a meeting at a UK club in a reasonably central location where we look at our objectives for the previous year, set new objectives, and Liz usually tries to get some experienced comp pilots to talk about a variety of subjects, from cross-country flying to sports psychology.
- For the past few years Liz et al. have organised the North and South Compete, a weekend of comp-style flying and/or lectures and trace analysis at Lasham and Pocklington in April, which gets us nicely back into cross-country mode. - This compete is open to everybody, not just women!
- Finally, if we do meet at competitions we'll sometimes get together and do little informal briefings on the grid.

In 2011 OGC hosted the pre-season meeting, partly because another club nearby had apparently threatened to charge Liz for the use of their briefing room in February (Liz does not get any funding for this at all), partly because the British team women wanted to do it at a smaller club specifically to target people who would not normally consider comp flying.

In the big clubs that organise their own regional or national competitions comp flying is part of the natural progression. You do your Bronze, then your xc endorsement, then your Silver C and then you fly a Regionals. In a small club like ours, comp flying often seems to be regarded by some as something that only really good people or people from the big clubs do.

It isn't. Comps are as serious as you want them to be. They can be a bit like a week-long Interclub League meeting. You get to fly from a different site,

Women's Development Initiative (contd.)

you meet new people, and you are pushed to do things you might not normally do - and discover that it's possible to go cross country on days when you would not normally even consider rigging.

And you learn a lot from the other pilots. I certainly have, even though putting all the theory into practice consistently is not all that easy...

So... to come back to the briefing room – it needed a clear-out, and it needed some heating, and some fresh paint. Armed with gloves, disposable overalls, and a dust mask, I removed tons and tons of junk from the room behind the briefing room (please don't refill it with the same amount of junk again), and various people did a few trips to the Ardley tip. Thanks to everybody, but in particular Jon and Nick, who did all the insulation, Graham, who sorted out the heating, John H, who built the telly shelf, Richie, who provided some large photo prints, and Cecilia, who helped with the painting, we now have a briefing room that can actually be used as one.

On the day, Fi and Phil's catering went down a treat, the visitors were most impressed with the OGC hospitality.

If you're interested in any of the women's development stuff look out for or subscribe to the BGA cross-country and comp newsletter (and there's also a separate women's development one).



Photo: Paul Smith

SIR PAUL NURSE (OUR NEW PRESIDENT)

Richard Hall



Photo: Richard Hall

I first met Paul in the early 90s when he was doing an MGPL conversion course at Enstone.

He had learned to glide while at university and had spent some time travelling the Lake District with an Oly 2b, some like-minded friends, and a bungee rope, with which they hurled themselves into the air!

When I met him he was Professor of Microbiology at Oxford but was soon to become Director General of Imperial Cancer Research which became Cancer Research UK under his leadership.

When we were forming a syndicate to buy a Janus CM in 1997, Paul was an enthusiastic participant and we got to know each other quite well.

He has always been a very busy person but usually made sure that he managed to join in the trips to the Alps, which we did for many years with the Janus. It was during one of these trips that I recall a discussion around the campfire one evening in the late 1990's when Paul was telling us about his work and discoveries in cell division. Eric, one of our other syndicate members said, words to the effect that, 'That sounded like it might be Nobel Prize winning sort of work' and as it turned out, it was! Paul was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 2001. He had already been knighted by Her Majesty the Queen in 1999.

I personally have shared two magic flights with Sir Paul. One was a trip in a Grob 109 to see the total eclipse of the sun in August 1999. We saw it from over 11,000 feet at a point about 20 miles south of

Sir Paul Nurse (contd.)

Portland Bill. We don't think anyone had a better view!

The other one was a flight in wave to over 20, 000 feet while flying the Janus in the Alps. We only had one oxygen mask between us and I was seriously worried that I might hog it too much and damage the mighty brain!

In 2003 Paul was elected to be President of Rockefeller University in New York. Look this place up on Google to save me writing a book!

While he was there, he was vociferous in criticising George Bush and other politicians for their attitude to science, particularly stem cell research.

He still has a lab in New York.

Last year he was elected to be President of The Royal Society following, amongst others, Sir Christopher Wren, Samuel Pepys, Sir Isaac Newton and Sir Humphrey Davy.

He is also the first Director of the Francis Crick Institute, which will be the biggest centre for biomedical research and innovation in Europe with a staff 1500 including 1250 scientist. Look this up too!

Paul is a glider pilot, he lives in Oxford and will make an excellent President of the Oxford Gliding Club.

I feel very privileged to be able to call him my friend.

TREASURER'S REPORT

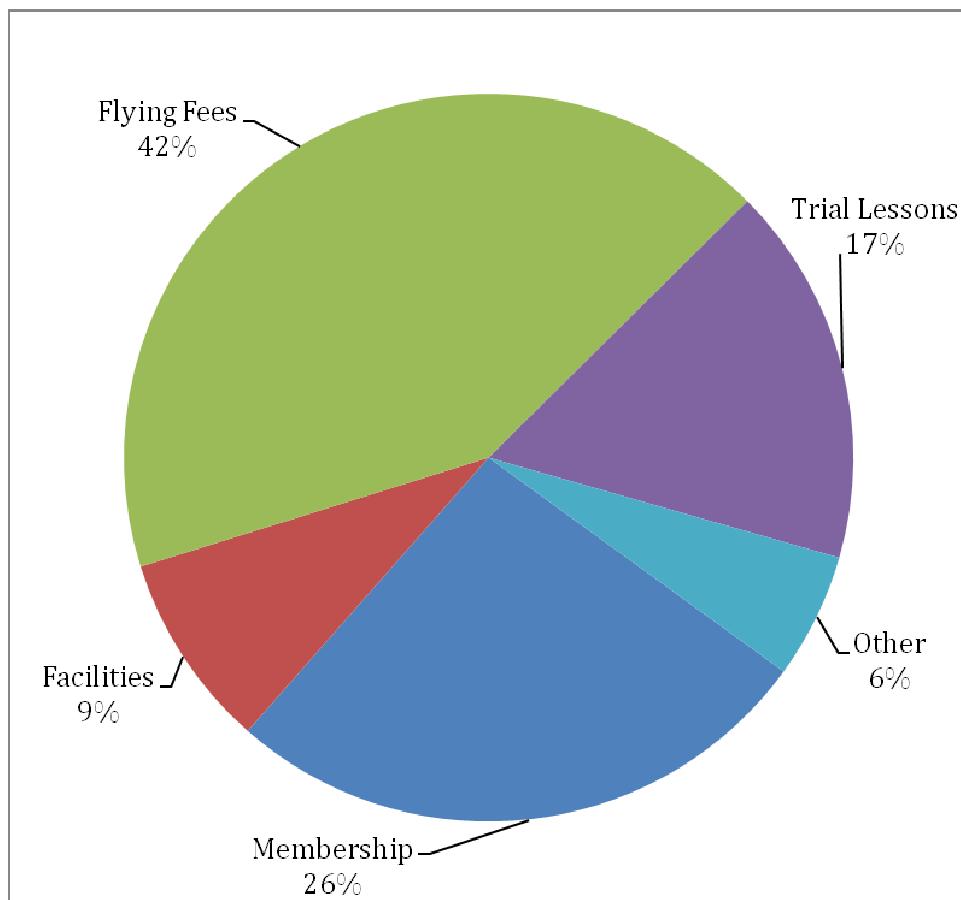
Jon Christensen



Looking back at the previous year we have done reasonably well considering the challenging wider economic environment. We still however did not manage any growth. We had a £4.7k cash surplus, which was lower than last year and was £5k short of target. Once depreciation, accruals and other factors were taken into account the balance of accounts was around £1,000 in the red.

Treasurer's Report (contd.)

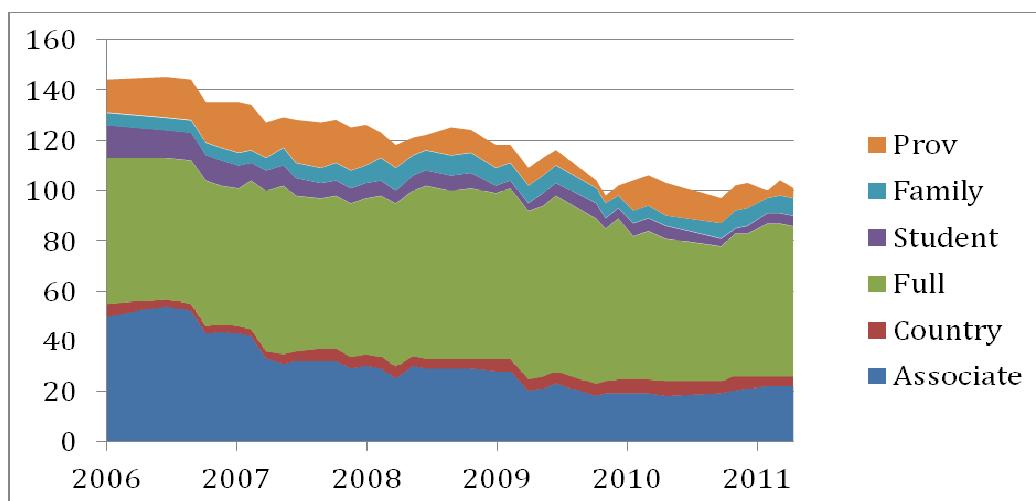
Where did our money come from?



Trial Lesson revenue is still low, it dropped by a third compared to the previous year resulting in £4.5k less revenue. This was down in part to a reduction in Friday group revenue caused by having no bookings for the first few slots of the year, and generally poor Friday weather affecting the flying possibilities.

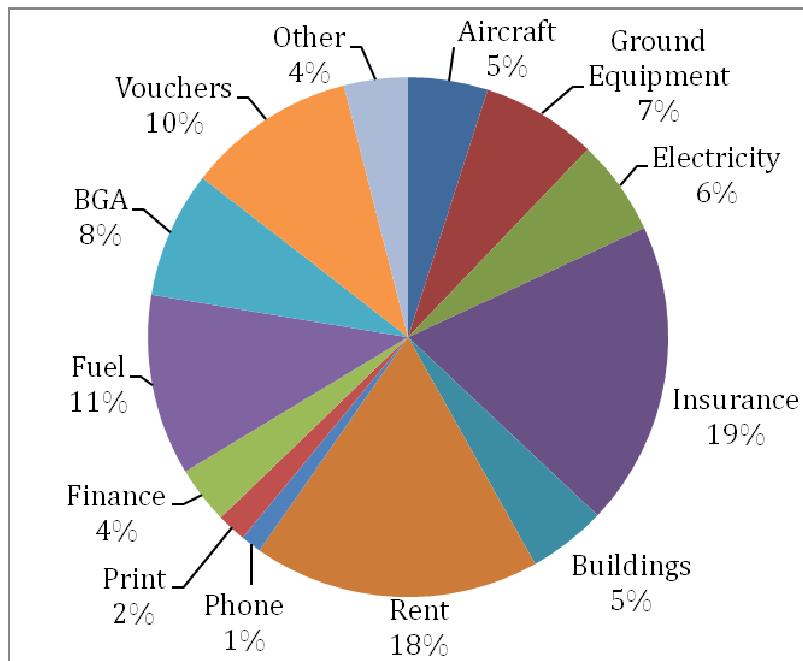
Previous to the flying fortnight, revenue from flying fees was considerably below the 5 year average and was concerning. It was the active flying fortnight that boosted this revenue. By the end of the year overall revenue from flying fees had only dropped slightly (£1.1k) which puts it back on average considering the number of members.

Membership and Facilities revenue were also down, as is indicative of fewer members as can be seen below.



Treasurer's Report (contd.)

Where did our money go?



Our insurance, although our biggest expenditure, is relatively modest compared to other clubs predominantly due to our low claims record. We minimized insurance expenditure again this year by syndicating the Astir and received a reduction in insurance expenditure by putting Daisy on a policy limiting the number of allowed flying days for that aircraft. Overall expenditure on insurance was down by £2k.

Fuel expenditure has gone up by £1.1k. Fuel is an essential ingredient supporting our flying activities, and as everyone knows all energy bills have increased significantly and it is only likely to continue to do so. We have negotiated a new LPG contract which will reduce our exposure to cost increase by about £2000 per year over the next three years based on today's market rate, but even with this reduced rate the overall cost of LPG is increasing. Cost of Fuel Oil has also increased incredibly over the last few years, within this upward cost trend there are seasonal variations and we have been purchasing it strategically to minimise cost where possible. Fuel should be used efficiently where possible but not to the detriment of operating efficiency or safety.

On aircraft we spent £1.3k more than last year, but this is essential expenditure. This like Ground Equipment is done at considerably lower cost than it would be if it had to be done outside the club. However the reality of it is that these costs will increase especially the owning and maintaining of the aircraft with the new EASA bureaucracy.

We awarded £2000 more in Launch Vouchers this year. We are a club run by and for its members and as a result we don't have to charge the far higher rates of a commercial organisation with paid staff. We could not operate as a club if people only came to fly. All members of the club are expected to assist in the running of it in whichever way they can. What have you done this week for the club? Everyone can do something, even if you're not technical. There are many, many tasks that require doing on a regular basis outside of the flying activities. It's not what your club can do for you, but what you can do for your club! Launch vouchers should be for recognising the work beyond that which is expected of a club member. Launch vouchers are a thank you for doing work, rather than payment. There are many other unrecognised 'unrewarded' volunteers helping the club run, and keeping our expenditure down. Thanks to all of them.

The majority of our other expenditure is fairly fixed and is not dependent on how little or much it is used.

The Future

We need to minimise expenditure while maximizing overall income. We are already one of the cheapest clubs in the country but the reality is that gliding is becoming more expensive.

Key to minimising expenditure is to prevent waste, be efficient and most important of all keep safe and don't break anything. An unfound strop is waste!

To maximise income we need to look at where the income is coming from.

Treasurer's Report (contd.)

Maximising income from Trial Lessons could be done by increasing the price and offering more slots, however the need to remain competitive doesn't allow for an increase and offering too many slots prevents members from flying and places more burdens on instructors, crew, bookings, marketing etc etc.

Maximizing revenue from membership is a fine balancing act; all of us feel the pinch in the current economic climate. If the cost increases too much, people just spend the same and fly less which we doesn't help revenue. For these reasons there is only a small inflationary increase in annual membership fee from £210 to £220, but we have reduced the non-flying associate membership fee in an effort to try and increase the number of people around and stay in touch with previous members

The bottom line is we cannot get significantly more income from the existing membership. We need more members to join the club. We need to recruit new members to increase overall revenue. A challenge suggested at the AGM for this year is for everyone to recruit and support just one new member, if successful this would go a long way towards our growth target and help keep the cost of gliding down for all of us. Do you know anyone?

Outlook

At the moment we're doing ok but for now the belt needs to be kept tight, we need to maintain what we have to the best of our ability. Depreciation, of for example aircraft and equipment, needs to be considered in the finances. Looking forward where finances allow we need a continuous improvement program to modernise to remain competitive and attractive in a changing and challenging market.

2011 IN A NUTSHELL

or

The Tale of a Year

or

Up and Down Yet Again.

Keith White

It was a fine day in early November, the winch and bus were on the hard standing, fuelled and ready to go; the gliders were out on the grass, DI'd and ready to go; and the Hercules was to be heard droning across the airfield - thirteen passes this time, plus the mandatory look to see if the field was there at the start and still there at the end, and a promised return at 14:00 with another load of RAF jumpers [or do they have to be pushed? there does seem to be a lot of shouting when they are doing their stuff]. The only novelty being that the run was from the SE rather than the usual N of E. So, not a lot to do except prepare for the AGM later in the day.

The AGM; an end or a beginning - perhaps both. About 40 members attended, and the evening concluded with NIBBLES and a great bonfire/fireworks. Taking into account depreciation, the club made a loss during 2010, and the bad news was that income needed to rise during 2011 to make the club viable.

Dec - the coldest Dec for a very long time, and the field covered in at least a foot [that's 30 cm for the youngsters] of snow, so no gliding for a couple of weeks. In fact the start of the year was pretty dire for the finances.

In January, the briefing room was rennervated, and many rodents were disturbed from their winter somnolence, thanks to Cloudy and volunteers, so



Photo: Paul Smith

that the wimmen's meeting [How Wimmen Go Faster Cross Country] could be held in comfort.

2011 in a Nutshell (contd.)

In February, we lost Fi, Phil, and Dave to the wilds of Scotland. All a severe loss to the club.

March 19th promised to be the first day of the year with the possibility of doing a cross country. Paul S had forecast the following:

"Tomorrow is looking like a nice soaring day with dry thermals starting 11am to 2200ft with convection in the blue through to 4pm rising to 3500ft at peak with low winds.

Definitely good for local soaring, with possibility of a small cross country.

I'm also assured there will be no RAF activity.

Get there early, support the club and spend some money :o)"

Some of our more adventurous souls did indeed manage a task, but Paul ended up in the middle of Silverstone watching the racing - might as well start as we intend to continue. And, of course, the RAF did turn up, both in the morning and late afternoon; and the skydivers had numerous runs dropping trainees from 3,000 ft. Ah well! it can only get better.

April - the warmest on record and the driest for years, but not so good for soaring as the lack of rain meant that the visibility was negligible at 1,000 ft. However some of the more expert among us managed to stay up over the Easter weekend.

Day	Flights logged	Longest flight
Fri 22/4	39	PM 220 min
Sat 23/4	43	JFF 325 min
Sun 24/4	32	Krys/CH 61 min
Mon 25/4	39	PM 175 min

PM took the laurels with a total of 637 minutes aviating.

At the end of the month there was the first of the OGC parties - a great success, and many thanks to Di.

May started with a change of weather, and skies clear enough to see a reasonable horizon. JSX went to Abingdon and stirred up interest in the club, and the club raised nearly £100 for the Cherwell Air Ambulance by selling raffle tickets for a trial flight.

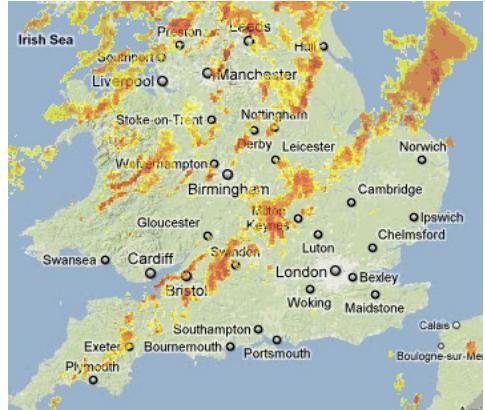
On the negative side we were informed that London Kidlington was requesting a HUGE restricted airspace for the 2012 Olympics period, with the [paranoid?] expectation that they would want to maintain it after the event. Chairman Paul liaising with the BGA to pull in their horns and allow us to fly.

At the end of May there was an expedition to Talgarth. Another great success with 5 days flying and PM getting to 9,500 ft before running out of headroom. Thanks to all who organised and took part.

June. The beginning of summer. Not really, more like March and April thrown together. On the bright side, you can see the horizon; unfortunately you are being blown towards it at a great rate of knots.

The "dawn to dusk" day was the 25th. At 02:00 our intrepid CFI was out in his slippers [he did not say what else] testing the weather - still raining so back to bed after an e-mail all round. Weather stayed damp and miserable until well into the morning when Rob's enthusiasm got us out onto the field to brave the winds and low cloud. The first launch was yours truly at 11:11, with Rob in the back, into cloud at 1,000 ft. Almost cloud flying continued for some while, but later in the day the cloud cleared, and there was a short period of reasonable weather. The last launch was at 18:35 - hardly dawn to dusk, but we tried, and can look forward to next year. In total 41 launches were made, and the longest flight was 21 min by Alex Jenkins and Simon Calvert. The coolest June for 12 years, based on Central England Temperature data; and more than average rainfall - the highest for the month for four years; in the last 100 years 24 Junes were wetter and 76 were drier.

July, and the "weather" continues. Fri 8th could have been a fine evening at Weston - apart from the rain



coming up in a band all the way from Cornwall. 20 miles north or south and we would have been meandering about the sky on a fine Friday evening. As it was I was in the glider

workshop observing Haste, Jon and Nick retrieving a hypodermic needle from the recesses of Nick and Cloudy's aircraft fuselage - evidently something to do with the gliding imperative "get high and stay high". The Central England Temperature of 15.4°C was 1.3 °C below the 1981-2010 mean, and the lowest for four years. Locally in southern England it was the coolest July since 1988.

August and things improve a bit. Sat 8th is reasonable without being spectacular, but on Sunday the showers come tipping down. News that Skydive Weston have failed to get agreement with the RAF to continue using the airfield. We shall miss the sight of the last learner down descending with pinpoint accuracy onto the cables, but the compensation will be more launches. Cloudy will have to find another outlet for

2011 in a Nutshell (contd.)

sarcastic responses to the DZ. The flying fortnight was a success, with many flights and most days flyable. Statistics as follows.

Day	flights	Max time [min]	A/C	Pilot
Mon 15-Aug	33	373	JSX	JC/PM
Tue 16-Aug	14	16	CCE	RH
Wed 17-Aug	26	150	JSX	JC/CS
Thu 18-Aug	0			
Fri 19-Aug	37	131	DG	CS
Sat 20-Aug	61	62	DMH	JF
Sun 21-Aug	43	282	616	NS
Mon 22-Aug	27	247	147	PH
Tue 23-Aug	0			
Wed 24-Aug	19	284	DG	CS
Thu 25-Aug	19	46	JSX	SMCC
Fri 26-Aug	0			
Sat 27-Aug	35	49	HFW	GC
Sun 28-Aug	53	112	902	PM
Mon 29-Aug	51	115	277	PS
Total	418			

Congratulations to all who flew, especially the daily pundits.

September, and the beginning of Autumn after the coolest summer for a generation. There does not seem to be a lot to say about September - the usual fairly cool wind down to the end of the year as I remember.

October and really the end of Summer - or is it? In the first week, a mini summer heat wave appears out of the blue [or perhaps with the blue; certain it is there were no clouds about] with the hottest October day on record. Doom and gloom all round over the weekend - "The air is too hot and there will be no thermals, just 7 minute circuits." Apparently so on Saturday, but on Sunday afternoon things perked up and there were THERMALS - great, big, enormous, uplifting, 4 knotters; even 6 at times, but that was probably just my strange thermaling technique. Sanity returned by the following Tuesday with a temperature drop of 10 C to greet the second expedition of the year to Talgarth. Rated "As expected" by Haste, but then what might one expect at this time of year in Wales - land of the soggy sheep.

ON THE NORTHERN FRINGES

Fi + Phil Hawkins

Since we left the flatness of Oxfordshire for the ruggedness of the Cairngorms National Park, it's true to say our lives have changed forever. In a good way. Things are very different here at the northern fringes of the OGC membership catchment area.

The climate

It doesn't rain every day, but the general outlook is nearly always cooler and wetter. Either you get used to it, or sit and suffer with damp feet. We could get very depressed at the regularity with which warm sunshine is forecast for the south of England while Scotland gets the wet stuff. But being more reactive to the weather helps to counteract this problem. We are much more weather-aware than we ever were before. If it's sunny we tend to down tools, log off and go out for an hour, leaving work for later. It's a lesson we have taken to heart.

Loch Imrich

We love our house, and most of our visitors feel the same way. The rooms are huge, the layout is quirky, and while it isn't anything like as remote as we once thought we wanted, it's a good compromise to have the village amenities within walking distance. After having lived for 25 years in a house with no staircase, and a flat garden, it's definitely a fitness booster to change to a steeply sloping garden and bedrooms upstairs. We love the fact that the tiny village loch, after which the house is named, starts just beyond our back gate, and we can re-cycle leftover bread to the ducks any time we want.

The scenery

Apart from a glimpse of the mountain between rooftops from the kitchen sink, we don't have a distant view from the house. However, it is only a 5-minute walk around the loch to the golf course in order to see the Cairngorm panorama. The peaks at the back of the gliding club 12 miles away are clearly visible from there, unless they happen to be stuffed into clouds. If that's the case, it probably isn't worth driving to the airfield and we decide to do something else. The mountains are stunning in the snow, misty and moody in the mornings, charming in the afternoon shadows, and subtly colourful in the evening.

Keeping active

Scotland is keeping us fit! It encourages us to explore, on foot and by bike. There are hugely varied walks possible from the house, to experience the rugged wilderness of Glen Banchor, the thundering waters of the Calder gorge, the peaceful Spey meadows or the little waterfalls on the stream-with-the-Gaelic-name. What's more, we have found nearly all our favourite wild mushrooms within easy walking distance. Dave and Mary Weekes live half a mile from us, and it's a quick amble up the hill to have a cuppa tea with them. The cycle path alongside the main road makes the three-mile bike ride to Kingussie a doddle, and while Phil has done the 18-mile bikeathon

On the Northern Fringes (contd.)

loop out to Laggan and back on several sunny afternoons, Fiona has been trotting on four legs at the local riding stables.

The wildcat trail

Newtonmore is the home of the charity that promotes conservation of the Scottish wildcat, a species threatened by interbreeding with domestic cats. It is possible to sponsor a cat; not a real one but a life-size model that you can paint any colour you like. We opted into this scheme as soon as we could. The cat statues must be placed in your window or garden in view of the road or a village footpath. There are over 100 of them scattered around the village, all identified in a full colour book available from the Wildcat Centre. Tourists buy the book and walk the Wildcat Trail, trying to locate as many cats as they can, and a small prize is given to anyone finding them all. It's a good way to raise the profile of this endangered species among visitors, and is particularly good fun for aliens, er, that is, children.

The Cairngorm Gliding Club

The Club at Feshiebridge has a smaller membership than the Oxford GC, and is equally friendly. Most launches are by aerotow, although the winch has been seen on several occasions this year. The tug pilots operate a rota in the same way as the instructors and duty pilots. Apart from the Robin tug G-BEMM, the club owns Puchacz and Acro two-seaters, and an Astir CS, but very few 'ab initio' members are under instruction at any one time. There are perhaps one or two first solos per year. Aerotow launches are more expensive, yes, but the chances of soaring are much better with the hill slopes close by. Circuits or 'sleigh rides' are fairly unusual. The club doesn't own the airfield, but rents it from a sympathetic lady laird.

Flying

Both the 'Mayfest' and 'Octoberfest' holidays had disappointing weather this year, but we have had several good hill soaring flights, and several thermal days with high cloudbases, flying in DaisyETA the K-21. Phil has somehow acquired a reputation for cloud flying (Phil flies in fog) but perhaps that's because most people don't do it here. He also persuaded Lynne Barrett to climb into the back seat to sample some weak wave, on a day when Graham reached 11,000ft over Aviemore in the Libelle. Of course, decent cross-country flying days are much rarer than in the south of England, but the CFI did his first 300km this year. Flying in a different area brings new ambitions, such as flying over Ben Nevis, which has been done by club pilots this year.

Catering

Strangely enough we have been doing the odd BBQ since we've been here! Any excuse will do. During the 'fest' weeks we did a number of special events for the visiting pilots, on another occasion a member booked us for a leaving party, another time it was for a birthday, and another time we were just trying out a



Photo: Fi + Phil Hawkins

new BBQ we bought from Argos in Inverness. Needless to say Fiona's cakes and bread puddings go down a storm with the locals, and we have also been asked to co-ordinate a Pot Luck Supper for December.

Firewood

Keeping warm in the clubhouse is important, what with the airfield elevation being 850ft, and a greater proportion of days spent gazing out of the window hoping for the weather to brighten up. Even in summer it's not unusual to see the log burning stove being lit. This year the club bought a 'scavenger licence' from the Forestry Commission, which entitled members to collect wood for a period of three months from a clear-felled area of the forest a couple of miles from the airfield. Pine and birch trunks up to six inches thick are just lying about waiting to be picked up and cut to size. Wood gathering expeditions on non-flying days were good fun and just another way of keeping fit. And of course some of the free wood found its way back to our house!

Shopping and travelling

At Newtonmore we have the Co-Op within walking distance for routine daily shopping, together with the post office, pub, craft shop, electrical shop, bike shop, tea shop and restaurant. The fish and chip wagon stops here every Wednesday night. For the doctor, dentist, vet, butcher, hardware and Chinese takeaway we need to go to Kingussie, three miles away, and there is a small Tesco at Aviemore, 14 miles away. If we want big shops we have to go to Inverness (45 miles) or Perth (65 miles). In Scotland you have to get used to being a long way from anywhere. Fiona uses the overnight sleeper trains about once a month to work in London. The railway station is less than a mile from our house. We have both used EasyJet

On the Northern Fringes (contd.)

flights from Inverness airport to Bristol or Luton, hiring cars for a few days at the destination. There are also scheduled services from Inverness to Gatwick, and recently to Birmingham too.

People

As newcomers from 'down south' one of the nicest things that we notice is how friendly people are. Total strangers say hello in the street. Shop assistants have time to chat, even in Tesco. OK, so there are a few boy racers roaring up and down the road, I guess you would find them anywhere, but teenagers generally keep quiet and are known to say politely "Welcome to Newtonmore" if they haven't seen you before. We have been invited to a couple of local parties, one by the couple who built our house about 15 years ago. Several of our neighbours seem to be golf club members, and have encouraged us to join. I don't think we have much inclination to start playing golf, but we might join as social members and buy the occasional meal at their clubhouse. Like

everything else in Newtonmore, it's within walking distance.

Little things

Making new friends. Going to the pub quiz on Thursday nights. Siskins and red squirrels in the garden. Polite road signs such as PLEASE BE A COURTEOUS DRIVER. Buying peanuts and other bird food from the post office. Improved chances of seeing the aurora borealis this coming winter, we hope. Our new log burning stove, and burning free wood in it. Drying our favourite wild fungi such as the sparassis in front of the stove. Cooking our dinner on top of it. The quietness of the night-time.

Things we miss

Friends. Thunderstorms. Blackberries. That's about it.

In a nutshell

It's different, but it's wonderful. We have died and gone to heaven.



Photo: Paul Smith

FINAL GLIDE is produced using Word (not because it's better, but because it's more accessible than the application used previously). This year, for the first time, it has not been printed but instead is only available as a PDF. Distributed free to members, ex-members and friends of the Oxford Gliding Club, and available on the OGC website.

Contributors to this issue (text or photo) were:

Jon Christensen, Jeanfre Fachon, Richard Hall, John Hanlon, Fiona Hawkins, Phil Hawkins, Claudia Hill, Nick Hill, Paul Morrison, Eckhard Peter, Phil Pratley, Paul Smith, Dave Weekes, Keith White

Apologies if I've assigned any photos to the wrong photographers.

As Final Glide is now available for download from a public website, members' addresses have not been included.

DAISY WALTZED THE BLUE DANUBE

Text and photos: Dave Weekes

Only the Danube isn't blue. Depending on the sun and the angle, it was anywhere from brown to a sort of dirty green. However Daisy has now definitely flown across the Danube. Maybe not the Vienna Woods though.

The "Blue" Danube from Daisy



It was fun flying over the Danube. There was a lot of heavy barge traffic – they must have been 2000 tonners at least, most of which seemed to be struggling upstream and moving very slowly over the ground. I'll swear that I saw the front end of one going under that big bridge in the picture and half an hour later the back end just cleared it!

Anyhow, after last year's short run to Tibenham it was a trifle further to the Vintage Glider Club International Rally in 2011 – just over 1000 miles from Weston to Spitzerberg, a little flying/gliding club beyond Vienna. In fact every time you got to the top of the winch launch we were looking directly at Bratislava, about 10 miles away across the border in Slovakia!

So this year it was just the OGC hard core travellers who went. Pete Brooks, Rob Jackson, Peter Boulton and myself. Plus Daisy and BNK of course! And being a real masochist I had to add another 450 miles to even get to Weston from the Highlands.

So from Weston we took two days. The usual midnight ferry and a long hike through Belgium, Holland and Germany. We'd arranged to spend the night at the Moewe gliding club at Obernau, south of Frankfurt, where we know some of the members. We were given a wonderful welcome, fed dinner, beer, an early breakfast and were on our way again as soon as we got the tent packed.

It has to be said that the Obernau club was outstanding – a small strip, winch launches only, but their club aircraft were all absolutely pristine – a K8, K6, LS4, LS8-18, Ka 2b, K13, Grob 103 twin and a DG1000! Plus an SF 25B and G 109B motorglider. Not only were the aircraft pristine, so was the winch and so was the hangar floor! We've a long way to go

yet, guys. To celebrate their 60th anniversary a 3-day long festival was being planned, with most of the local population expected to attend. It's no wonder gliding has such a high profile in Germany – the club members really work at it.

Anyhow, the end of Day Two of the road trip saw us at Spitzerberg. Now Austria is mountainous isn't it? Not Lower Austria, which is absolutely board flat except for two large limestone outcrops near the airfield. And the flat land was covered in more wind turbines than I've seen in my life! Being located between Vienna and Bratislava airports the airspace was "interesting". However a good-sized glider "box" existed around the airfield and the Vienna Air Traffic Control was very helpful in allowing extra height on good days. In fact I flew one of the ATC guys in Daisy one day – he had a PPL but no open cockpit glider experience. He flew us across the Danube. "We'd better stop here" I said, "The Danube is the north edge of the glider box". He replied "Is it? All I see are lines on my radar screen"!

Daisy and the flags of many nations



The Spitzerberg club airfield isn't long, and winch launches were 1000 – 1200 feet max. On a good few days there were reasonable chances of getting away plus there were about four tugs for aerotows.

Daisy waltzed the Blue Danube (contd.)

The infamous VGC "International Evening" passed in the usual alcoholic haze. The OGC repeated their hugely successful "typical English" meal of chicken tikka masala. Thanks to Peter Boulton's foresight in acquiring vast cooking pots and Rob's sauce about 200 portions were served before we ran out.

And there was much more flying. The usual fabulously varied vintage gliders, all different shapes and colours. Rob, Pete Brooks and I ran ourselves ragged keeping up with demand for flights in Daisy. Peter Boulton had been joined by his two brothers, who gave a very good impression of enjoying themselves!

One non-soaring day there was a move to recreate "the good old days" by bungee launching the Hols der Teufel primary off the top of the hill "the Spitzerberg". However to avoid authentic replication of the hard work of carrying gliders back the hill, the mad Ulf Kern, one of the owners, took a winch launch and landed the Hols on the rather rough top. Chris Zahn was loaded into it, we all got hold of the bungee ropes – "walk...run...let go"! (in German) and Chris soared off with ease. There wasn't any hill lift so it was straight down onto the airfield. Ulf brought the Hols back and said "David, you next". What!!! With my vast experience of one bungee launch in my life. But who can turn down such an offer? I was strapped in and the sweating bungee team galloped off down the hill. Los! Well I weigh 30 kilos more than Chris and we didn't exactly soar

away, bumped over the ground more like. However elastic band power eventually triumphed over gravity and I was flying! Rob has the video clip to prove it.

Bungee launching the primary



And on other days, strange gliders were offered for flying. An Orlik II – no I'd never heard of one either, but it flew very nicely, like a K6E. Grunau Babys, the Krajanek. Pure history!

Was it worth going all that way? Definitely. And next year the rally is in Lithuania. Now that's somewhere very few of us have been. Cheap flights to Vilnius anyone?



Photo: Paul Smith

FRIDAY NIGHT IMPRESSIONS

(all photos provided by John Hamilton)

