



FINAL GLIDE

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Edited by Claudia B. Hill

Neil Swinton

Give us a Wave

This year OGC visited the Black Mountains Gliding Club at Talgarth. There has not been an official Club expedition for many years, the last one by my memory was also a Talgarth trip back in the late eighties. This year CFI John Hanlon decided to re-instate the event, and a list on the club-house wall was soon populated with the biro-scrawled names of assorted hopefuls.

Most experienced pilots have heard the tales about Talgarth - 'You wouldn't choose it for a field landing', and 'smaller than the Weston Golf course'. This was worrying.

John Hanlon arranged the week with Talgarth who seemed slightly bemused that we intended to bring 19 club members to their small airfield. Most people had opted to stay for the entire 7 days, a few arrived mid week, and another small group could only make the last weekend.

Paul Smith found himself in charge of 'domestics' and managed the complex and movable target of booking 6 or 7 massive caravans at nearby Llangorse campsite. These caravans were large, warm, and were capable of sleeping 8 people, although most of us shared with 3 people to get a bit of 'personal space'. I am told the weekend-only team did manage to squeeze 6 into a van for one night.

The weather forecast for the week ahead was, to be honest, pretty dire. Mostly rain and mist I seem to remember. Luckily it was in the main, wrong! However, on the Sunday when driving to Talgarth the lead party had torrential rain most of the way. When we arrived on the field it was too wet

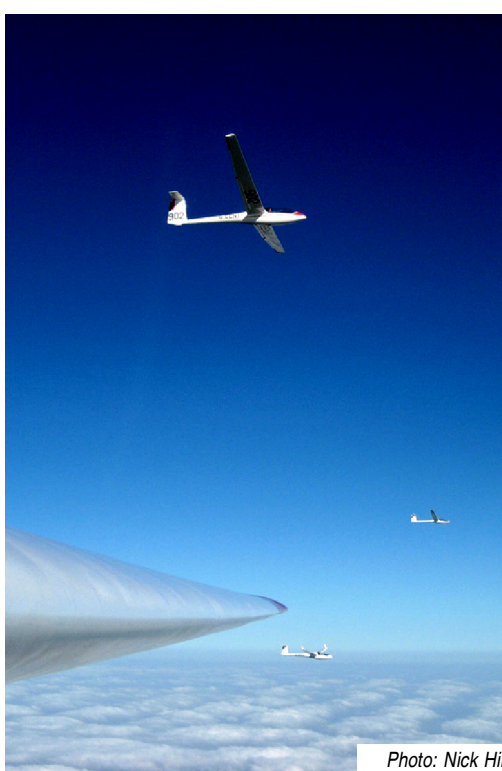


Photo: Nick Hill

to drive onto the grass, so we parked the trailers on limited hardstanding, filled a few forms in, and then went for a quick (very quick) walk around the soggy airfield perimeter. It didn't take very long. The walk revealed that the airfield is really just a small hill, a limited amount of flat ground on top, and then gently falling away all around. Several landing directions are marked out with threshold markers on the upslopes.

The first morning we all lined up for site checks with the resident Talgarth instructor. One slightly quirky part of his behaviour was the unbuckling of his straps and the opening of the K13 canopy before the glider had actually stopped its landing roll! There was no wind, so to be honest the site check

did not really prepare us for the more tricky aspects of the site. When landing the technique is to use the markers as your reference point, then you round out and touch down on the 'going up' bit, coming to a stop on the flat top field. Overshooting and landing down-hill is not recommended.

The wind never really picked up that first afternoon, so Andrew and I packed a cagoule, sandwiches and a flask of weak tea, and trudged to the top of the mountain next to the site. This took a couple of hours, and, of course, by the time we got there the wind had increased enough to allow

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Also in this issue:

Daisy did Norfolk



Daisy did RIAT



Dawn till Dusk at OGC



One-way to Sackville Farm



Club Ladder



Inter-Club League



Chairman's Corner



CFI's report



The Barbecue Treadmill



and more...

CLUB LADDER

Nick Hill
Club Ladder
Steward

Open Ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Claudia Hill	2229	2026	1885	1705	1641	1506	10992
Paul Smith	2258	2024	1832	1665	1575	1514	10868
Dave Bray	2408	2405	1695	1193	914	902	9517
Richard Hall	2318	2224	1976	1909			8427
Paul Morrison	1986	1805	1428	1076	905	654	7854
Andrew Butterfield	3099	2156	1844				7099
Martin Hastings	2220	1801					4021
Neil Swinton	2093						2093
Jon Christensen	854						854
Phil Hawkins	554						554

So how did 2010 compare with 2009? Nationally there was a similar level of activity in 2010 as in 2009 in terms of both the number of pilots recording flights and the amount of cross-country kilometres recorded indicating that 2010 was similar to 2009.

The OGC situation was slightly different. At OGC the number of pilots logging flights fell from 14 to 10 but the distances recorded on the ladder increased by over 30% to 13384km showing that those flying cross-

Weekend Ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Paul Smith	1832	1665	1514	1497	1424	917	8849
Claudia Hill	2026	1641	1506	1163	1006	876	8218
Dave Bray	1695	1193	914	530			4332
Paul Morrison	1428	905	654	540			3527
Neil Swinton	2093						2093
Martin Hastings	1801						1801
Jon Christensen	854						854
Phil Hawkins	554						554

country went a lot further this year.

The situation at OGC is actually better than that as I know that more cross-country was done but not logged. I would encourage all pilots to log their cross-country flights as the national ladder is now being used to help demonstrate the amount of gliding activity in the UK and such use of data can only help in future when potential airspace restrictions are proposed.

The two ladders of most interest to OGC pilots are the Weekend ladder that is restricted to flights made at the weekend and the Open ladder for flights on any day of the week. Both ladders were closely fought this year with Claudia Hill the winner of the Open Ladder by just 124 points from Paul Smith. Paul was however the winner of the Weekend Ladder with Claudia in second place. On the national ladders this placed Claudia at number 141 and Paul at 146 on the UK Open Ladder and Paul at 81 and Claudia at 90 on the UK Weekend Ladder at the time of writing this article. (Strictly speaking the BGA ladders run January to December but OGC gives out the trophies at the November AGM so they are based on the ladder positions at mid November...).

Another view of the flights offered by the ladder web site

Distance Ladder

Pilot	Km	Flights	Avg Km
Claudia Hill	3349.8	18	186.1
Paul Smith	3098.5	14	221.3
Dave Bray	1677.0	8	209.6
Paul Morrison	1456.8	7	208.1
Richard Hall	1291.6	4	322.9
Andrew Butterfield	1225.6	3	408.5
Martin Hastings	627.8	2	313.9
Neil Swinton	342.9	1	342.9
Phil Hawkins	179.5	1	179.5
Jon Christensen	135.0	1	135.0

is the Distance Ladder that shows totals and averages for the year. Compared to the national ladder this shows Claudia and Paul in the top 110 UK pilots in terms of distance flown from a list of 615 UK pilots logging flights on the ladder.

If you look at the national ladders it does show that you do not need the latest hot ship to compete. A Lasham member came 4th on the national Distance Ladder recording 10838km flown over 35 flights with an average flight distance of 309.7km flying a Ka6E.

As there was a club trip to Talgarth this year I have included the open height ladder as several club members have entered their height gains on this ladder. OGC members had fun in the wave and as a result also managed to place OGC top of the Weekend Club Height Gain ladder and second on the Open Height Gain Ladder for the month of October.

There is now the option to have a set of predefined club tasks on the ladder. As defined in the ladder rules a

Club Task is one that has been set up by the Club Ladder Steward, on the ladder web site, in advance of the date of the flight. Such tasks may be flown in either direction and will always be scored as if pre-declared. They may be flown in addition to or instead of a pilot's main task. If you set out having declared one task and then decide it is not achievable then flying one of the club tasks will count as flying a declared task. I started setting these up this year but never completed it so sorry about that, but I will set them up for next year.

Just a reminder that I can no longer enter flights in the national ladder on behalf of others pilots. I would therefore encourage anyone with cross-country or height

gain flights to enter them directly to the national ladder via the web site <http://www.bgaladder.co.uk>. The advantage of individual pilots entering their own flights via the web site is that you can enter all details of the flights, i.e. the task, the time, the glider type and any comments you may have on the flight. The system will also immediately calculate your score and reflect the changes in the ladders. You can of course still enter them in the cross-country book that is kept in the clubhouse but these flights cannot be entered into the national ladders. If anyone has any questions about the club ladders, national ladders, scoring, glider handicaps used etc. then just ask.

Open Height Ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Total
Dave Bray	457	332	789
Paul Smith	435	323	758
Paul Morrison	384	291	675
Andrew Butterfield	330		330
Neil Swinton	239		239

Editorial

Another year has gone by, and the AGM is fast approaching, earlier than expected this year. So here is another issue of Final Glide.

It was the same struggle as ever to get people to write something - and to send their contribution in time before Final Glide is supposed to be going to print. There were some exceptions, some people sent me their stories unprompted, thanks for that.

For the rest my gentle and not so gentle nudging has worked again, so that thanks to YOU I think we have another good collection of stories and useful information. I hope you'll enjoy it as much as I have.

Claudia B. Hill

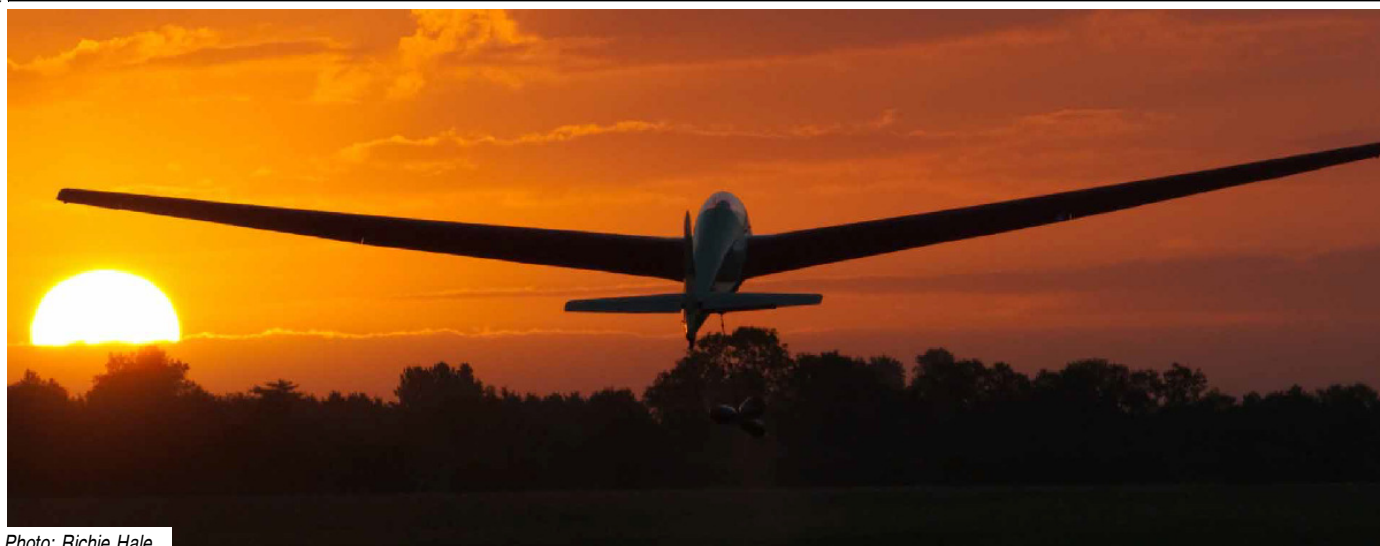


Photo: Richie Hale

Pavlova

4 egg whites
8oz (ed.: 226.796185g or half a non-metric pound) Caster sugar
1 tablespoon cornflour
2 teaspoons vinegar
¼ teaspoon vanilla essence

Method:

- Whisk egg whites until stiff.
- Add sugar gradually.
- When very stiff add cornflour, vinegar and vanilla.
- Bake in cool oven (150°C, 300 F, gas mark 2) for 1½ hours.

Topping:

Whipped double cream
Mixed seasonal fruits



So what do I do with the egg yolks?

4 egg yolks
1 tablespoon Caster sugar
2 x 10 fl oz (2 x 284ml) double cream
Method:

- Beat yolks and sugar
- Warm milk in bain-marie
- Stir in egg mix
- Cook gently until coats back of spoon
- Strain into serving dish
- Chill overnight

Topping:

Sprinkle with brown sugar and toast (with blowtorch) until deep golden and caramelised.

Crème Brûlée



Fiona Hawkins

Both images from: <http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/>

Daisy did Norfolk

Text and photo: Dave Weekes



In the last few years Daisy has been to the Vintage Glider Club international rallies in France, Austria and twice in Germany. This year the international rally was in a less exotic location – Tibenham in Norfolk. Daisy went together with BNK and Loulou the Capstan. OGC participants were Peter Boulton, Peter & Ursula Brooks, Graham & Lynne Barrett, Garry & Janet Cuthill, Martin Cooper, Rob Jackson, Douglas Wood and myself.

Being UK based, many of the 100+ gliders were British. There were therefore a lot of Slingsby products - no fewer than eight T21's, five of which were in Air Cadets colours and five Skylark 4's – more of both types than I've ever seen together in one place. There were also several T31's plus lots of more exotic gliders both from the UK and Europe, but only one Capstan! Loulou always generates interest at VGC rallies and lots of Europeans want one.

A total of 170 pilots were registered, 90 from the UK. The Germans and the Dutch had about 25 each and the rest from eleven other countries including the USA and New Zealand!

I'd had been worried that a largely unsponsored Norfolk Gliding Club would fall short of the organisation previously showed especially by the Austrians and Germans but they coped magnificently, with the help of a large group of enthusiastic Air Cadets.

Chris Zahn turned up with the Habicht, fresh from stealing the show with his aerobatic routine at Shuttleworth. He repeated the display one evening, with music, smoke canisters, the lot – and left the Air Cadet officers open mouthed – especially the 2 turns of inverted spin – all in an open cockpit glider designed in 1936. Pity Chris was not quite so good two up on a mini moto in the dark towards the end of the international evening but that's another story – don't mention it to Peter Boulton whose car they ran into though.

Norfolk isn't a place I know well – it's certainly generally flat and agricultural but it's actually very pretty – lots of nice little villages (and pubs) – plus of course large

numbers of former WWII airfields. From 3000 feet you could almost see more than from WOTG! Stefi in her Zuvogel landed out in one large flat field. The farmer congratulated her on her choice because it too was an ex-airfield (and for being the first German to land there!)

Having emerged from our record dry June and July, the weather was a bit mixed, but it has to be said that the conditions were soarable on most days – either in the morning or the afternoon but rarely both!

The infamous international evening (the one with all the free drink) was a truly roaring success. By tradition the host nation doesn't participate but we figured that if the Brits didn't contribute it would be a bit quiet. OGC starred for the second year in a row by providing a typical English meal – chicken tikka masala! In the absence of head chef Rob, the gap was magnificently filled by Peter Boulton, Coops and Pete Brooks who between them borrowed the cooking gear, bought 20 kg of chicken plus the sauce and rice and produced an immensely popular meal for about 150 people!

Daisy was as popular as ever. Ulf Kern, (the mad barefoot German who has done all the Silver Badge legs in his Hol's der Teufel primary) and I had about an hour and a half in stonking conditions before deciding it was someone else's turn. We struggled down to circuit height and hit 6 knots up – well who can resist! We repeated that process five times, laughing our legs off before we finally succeeded in landing!

As usual flights were scored in other exotic gliders – the Hol's der Teufel, the fantastically restored Krajaneck (a fully aerobatic version of the Grunau Baby) and a genuine pre-war Olympia Meise amongst others.

Ken Wallis turned up one evening with an auxiliary engine which had been tested on Graham Saw's Petrel in 1947. A beautifully engineered 2-stroke which had originally been the starting engine on a Messerschmitt 262!

And there were lots of guys there with brilliant scale models – both old gliders and very expensive jets. We figured that you could have bought about 10 Oly 2B's for the price of one model jet – but they were impressive. But after a go in Daisy one of the modellers seemed convinced that he should try full-scale soaring – score one for us!

Austria next year anyone?

Treasurer's Report FY09/10

Paul Smith

The end of 2009 saw Ian stand down as Treasurer after 9 years of loyal service leaving some big shoes to fill.

Fortunately for me during that time Ian had put in place a largely automated system for handling the day to day bookkeeping involved in managing members' accounts. The transition and learning curve wasn't too steep and after a couple of months I was flying solo.

Due to the tough economic times Ian had recommended no material increase in member's fees. It was clear however that our suppliers were unlikely to be so generous. How were we going to ensure the expected expenditure increases in fuel, insurance, BGA fees, etc weren't going to push us into the red? Some decisions had to be made...

- After researching what local clubs were charging I increased the fees we charge for Trial Lessons and Mini-Courses. Recently we enabled on-line payment of these via the web site which has seen a flurry of purchases from as far afield as Australia.
- In previous years it was possible to earn a Launch Voucher by volunteering to be crew on a Friday night during the summer. I decided to suspend that for the time being. This saved the club around £1000. In any case coming out on a Friday is great fun and the social start to the weekend.
- I examined aircraft usage and made a recommendation to the Committee to either sell or syndicate one of the Astirs which together are underused. It was decided to syndicate with a view to softening our insurance bill and allow interested members to experience the advantages of private ownership without the investment.
- Address the £5000 owed in arrears. People were chased and changes were made to the members' accounts system to automatically email a statement of account each time I cash up. Also at the last AGM the motion to withhold flying from members with arrears of more than 3 months was passed. As we close this financial year the arrears are now £1,300.

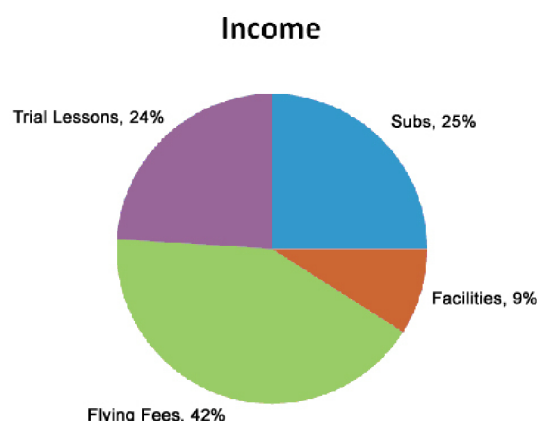
Without these measures we would not have been able to make some of the improvements made this year and run the risk of making a loss.

So how did 2009/10 turn out? We made a cash surplus of just over £6000. However, once we account for accrued rent, utilities, membership, arrears and depreciation, what seems like a reasonable amount is actually nearer break even. We need to make substantially more so in the long term we can invest in big ticket items like

new aircraft and ensure the club's ongoing viability.

Income

Income this year broke down as follows:

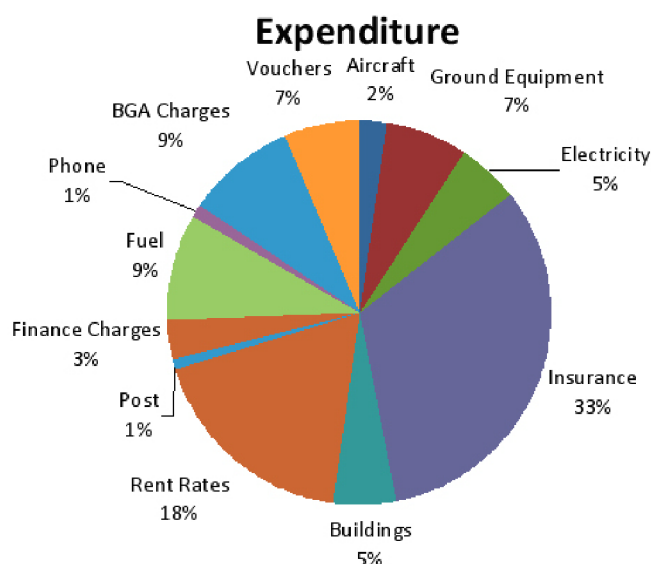


Whilst this is similar to previous years there is a trend that the slice of pie occupied by subs is shrinking (over £1000 this year alone) and being propped up by Facilities (due to the Astir syndicate) and Flying Fees (due to the reasonable weather encountered this year). This puts a larger proportion of our income at risk of the weather. We currently have only 77 flying members but really need another 20 to reach a comfortable number, considering the fleet and facilities we have. If you have any ideas how to increase our membership then please approach the committee. This together with the weather has the largest influence on our finances, and what you have to pay in fees.

On the plus side income from flying was £3000 (14%) more than any previous year and Trial Lessons equal to the best of previous years. So whilst it may not seem very efficient at the launch point sometimes and even though we flew 6 days fewer than last year, we must be doing something right!

Expenditure

Expenditure this year broke down as follows:



Treasurer's Report FY09/10 (contd.)

Paul Smith

As you can see our single largest expense is insurance, accounting for a third of total expenditure. This is actually slightly skewed as I decided to pay our Property Owners insurance (i.e. the hangar) in advance this year rather than by instalments to save a little bit of money, plus we are ahead on the instalments paid for glider insurance which runs from April each year. In second place is rent and rates, both pretty much fixed costs, no matter how much we fly. We have been under charged for our rent for the past few years (and therefore accruing the difference) so in reality this slice should be larger. Joint third and fourth are Fuel and BGA charges. Whilst there are some fixed BGA costs both of these will vary by the number of members and amount of flying. Did you know the BGA charge us £26 for each flying member and £2 for each temporary member (Trial Lesson) in capitations?

Vouchers account for 7%, even after suspending payment to the Friday night crews this season. This is what we give back to members for helping out with maintenance, performing a Duty Pilot stint and to help out our single Cadet. If we didn't have a dedicated (and thrifty) team of inspectors and maintenance crew the 2% actual spent on Aircraft Maintenance would easily increase beyond what we spend in vouchers, so thank you to them.

Another 7% on ground equipment mainly due to a new (to us) grass topper bought to replace our worn out one just a week before the RAF decided to cut the entire airfield! Another significant cost buried in this is lost strops, each of which costs the club around £60! So when one breaks please keep an eye on it as it lands and collect it as soon as possible. Better still don't pull too hard and break

them in the first place.

Rather unusually for recent years, buildings is 5%. As you may have noticed we have some nice new doors and windows which should last a few years, a redecorated club room, less clutter thanks to a couple of maintenance days and a clean clubhouse thanks to Di. The building in general was starting to get tatty and investing a little money in this direction was overdue. We have also had to start paying for refuse collection this year.

In summary I think we have done pretty well with expenditure this year. Let's try and keep things that way by looking after what we have. If you are not already helping do that and think you can, please step forward and help us remain one of the most affordable clubs in the country.

Next year and beyond

Our current cash surplus needs to double to ensure our long term future. We need to control and reduce expenditure and increase our income. This is a difficult balancing act. A large proportion of our expenditure is in fixed costs which we have very little influence over and which doesn't change regardless of the membership or fleet we operate. Ideally we need to increase our numbers with new members and to retain those we already have.

Nothing is getting any cheaper. Fuel prices are steadily increasing, VAT is due to rise at the end of this year and whilst the insurance we pay is favourable compared to other clubs it is still our largest cost. Don't be surprised to see a small increase in fees this year that reflects this position.

It's been an interesting first year in the position of Treasurer, both harder and more work than I was expecting. I'd like to thank the Committee, the Directors and especially Ian for all the support I have received.



Photo: Claudia Hill

Give us a Wave (contd.)

Photos:
Claudia Hill

some hill soaring to commence. We watched as the Capstan, MOZI and 902 climbed away in the gentle hill lift in front of us. Still we took some good photo's, and watched with awe as the Nymphsfield DG-505 beat us and the hill up with reckless abandon! They were unsure if we were hill walkers, or glider pilots, but they claimed that one pass they spotted the Terry Joint logo on my fleece so they knew they could come in close and fast! One of the locals found some wave down the valley, but our lot were firmly stuck to the hill.

The local pub in Llangorse had good cheap food, so most nights we ended up there, our numbers increasing night by night until there was 20+ on the final evening, which did cause the serving system to creak a bit.... :)

The early part of the week gave us increasing southerly winds, which are not known for good wave and limited the hill soaring to the main bowls with the brave venturing down the apparently unlandable Cymdu valley. However the wind direction did mean the take-offs became rather challenging with rough rotor and very little clearance over the trees. On one day, rather than risking a 15kt tailwind on takeoff we visited the nearby Red Kite feeding centre, which was terrific.

The swirling wind made even the tug approaches interesting, after launching one glider the tug took 3 attempts to get back down safely, and so the driver suggested that we all 'wait until the wind knows which way it is blowing'. During the enforced wait, a few running repairs were made to the JSX trailer, as an inconvenient rock on the narrow road to the field had burst a tyre and knocked the axle out of true. Using a very long bar, and some heavy club members John H managed to straighten the wheel for the journey home... Sadly the neat hub cabs that John Mart carefully fitted had distributed themselves along the A40 at various places, never to be seen again. Sorry John!

Martin Coops and I later shared an hour or so in the Capstan, during which I managed to jam my knee onto the radio transmit button, and we broadcast our conversation about soaring, hotels, cheese and life in general over the airways to most of southern England. Good job we never started talking about Girls...!

A few people picked up weak wave in the valley, but nothing too impressive, yet...

As the week went on the wind shifted around the east, and the stories of the 'Talgarth East Wave' were trotted out. And sure enough on the Thursday the exploratory launch in the Talgarth K13 showed wave over the site, and the wind direction was not too challenging, so we rigged 616 and I took a rather nervous launch behind the tug. Do you know the sort of take off where after fighting the slope and the wind and the turbulence you discover after about a minute that you haven't taken a breath yet? The tug was dropping people off at 1800' feet alongside a long scraggly cumulus bar, and with the tuggie saying "That's it - you're in" I nervously released and explored my first wave climb. After making one mistake and finding myself enveloped in



JSX Wingtip + Mozi

rough rapidly sinking cloud, I stayed in front of the marker cloud and climbed slowly up to a peak of 10,000 or so. Somehow I had imagined wave flying as a solitary pastime, just me up in the still blue - but it wasn't - our wave bar had grey clouds above and below and was stuffed full of gliders tracking up and down, so a good lookout became vital. Sadly it did not seem possible to get the extra thousand feet or so for a Gold height, and after hearing of rain showers starting to hit the airfield a mass descent started with no-one wanting to be the last one down onto a small airfield covered in other-people's gliders! I think we all found the circuit and approach interesting that day - I honestly thought I had fallen off the glider at one point after an especially rough spot on the downwind leg!

Saturday was a scrub day - the only day we didn't fly all week - and the cloud never really lifted but Liisi, James and Nora went horse riding and a few of us visited Hay-on-Wye and nearly ended up getting locked into a bookshop after losing track of time...

Sunday was most likely the best day of the week. Andrew flew our DG-202, and I was fortunate to get a ride in Richard Hall's Janus. The wave set up in a similar way to Thursday, only this time to nearly 11,000', but this again was infuriatingly a bit too low for those seeking a Gold claim. The sky was a magnificent blue, the clouds pure white and the views unforgettable. What a way to end the week!

There is no doubt that the single-seater pilots got the most out of the week, some getting in excess of 10 hours airborne. John Hanlon with our 505 did a sterling job in balancing the need to introduce our more experienced pilots to the skills needed for ridge and wave flying, with the need to provide flights for our student pilots and those who would not be flying solo. Richard Hall and Martin Cooper also generously provided flights in their two-seaters. By the end of the week, every Oxford pilot had experienced a wave flight, including those people who could only make the weekend - quite an achievement.

It turns out that the week we originally wanted was booked by Dunstable, and they suffered poor weather only flying on one afternoon. We flew for 6 days, and people soared in wave every one of those days. Good for us, not so good for them!



Happy CFI at approx. 8,000ft

Tiredness can kill. Take a break. (or: Dawn till Dusk at OGC)

John Mart

I had just climbed above 15000 QNE when the incident occurred.

For several years, I had listened to fellow pilots enthusing about the pleasures of gliding in wave, and I had read Phil's vivid description of one of his cloud flying experiences. I had vowed to myself to experience these things for myself.

I had only one solo aerotow in my logbook and for that reason I chose to drag CYZ to this mountain gliding site where they only launch by that method. On my very first day, there were magnificent lenticular formations and I couldn't wait to get aloft.

The local CFI had seen my logbook. He had decided that I only needed the minimum of briefing about the various quirks of curlover and the preference of a downwind landing in some conditions depending on the wind direction and the slope of the field. After a briefing, I could take a tug launch.

With the basic knowledge of 3 degrees per thousand feet, I had been prudent in the choice of my motorcycle leggings and a warm pullover for my flight which, I was convinced, would be extremely cold because of the height I would reach.

The launch was straightforward, I had no difficulty with the turbulence, and the tug pilot took me to exactly the right position to commence my first experience of wave soaring. Within what seemed just a few seconds the vario rose to a value I had never seen over Oxfordshire and I realised that everything I had heard about the tremendous lift in smooth air whilst flying straight ahead was true. I was singing for joy as the altimeter wound up and up; the Ka8 certainly knows how to climb I thought.

Ten thousand feet on the dial was fast approaching and I set the oxygen supply into operation. We (that is to say, the Ka8 and I) climbed higher at an undiminished rate. From now on it would be "we". Soon, I could see the distant coastline that would have taken an hour or more to reach by car. As the needle passed the 15000 feet, my thought turned to the possible risk of penetrating the airway above and I turned to pull the map from beside the seat and saw that the oxygen bottle pressure was almost depleted. Simultaneously, the regulator became unstable as the remaining life-supporting gas drained out. I had had a previous experience, during my working life, of oxygen starvation and I knew how rapidly the brain stopped functioning without an oxygen supply.

Get down, get down. I deployed full airbrake and eased the stick forward watching the ASI to avoid exceeding VNE. I couldn't believe it, the vario wouldn't drop below zero and I pushed the stick hard forward. The whole aircraft began to vibrate as the airbrakes were exposed to

more thrust than they had ever experienced. I began to experience the onset of a well-remembered tunnel vision and as my brain began to shut down reception from the optic nerves and the starved oxygen regulator began an intermittent whine as the last dregs of the gas ran out.

Suddenly, I was jolted back to reality as the whine of the regulator transformed into the sound of my wife's alarm clock

on her bedside table. Thank goodness! I'm going to survive, I've been dreaming; well, it started as a dream but it most definitely ended as a nightmare.

New questions drifted into my sleepy mind: why had my wife set her alarm to wake her when it was still dark? Why wasn't she turning to hit the alarm stop button as she always does? Why was I wearing a thick

pullover and motorcycle leggings in bed?

Consciousness began to return to my sleep-starved brain. I had been sleeping in my car and an insistent alarm screech was coming from my wristwatch hanging from the clothes hook in the dark above my head. I groped around for the watch and hit several of its buttons. The alarm stopped, then the watch announced in its female computerised voice "The time is 3.45 am", closely followed by "Today is Saturday June nineteen, year two thousand and ten", and then just as if it was trying to re-assure me, "UK time updated".

As my memory got back into gear, I was very soon aware that I had been asleep for a whole 4 hours, I was indeed wearing a thick pullover and my motorcycle leggings, and the car was parked beside the Tost winch. The winch had been left set up the previous evening in readiness for a quick start.

It was the nearest Saturday to the longest day and I had made the mistake of volunteering to be the first winch driver of the day for what used to be an annual event.

Having wiped a clear patch in the condensation on the inside of the car window, I peered out into the darkness. The north-eastern sky was showing the first glimmering of daylight, and, although I couldn't make out any detail, somebody had put the lights on in the distant hangar and the rest of the early risers were, presumably, preparing the aircraft for pre-sunrise flight. At least I didn't have to set up the winch. A sudden thought struck me: there was a dew layer on the winch and it might not start. I was pleased I had set the alarm to give me a half-hour to prepare myself and the winch. I crawled out of the car and staggered sleepily into the winch driving seat. A thrust on the starter button and the starter motor leapt into life; but the winch engine didn't. I was well aware of chairman Paul's desire for OGC to be the club to get the earliest glider into the air and my mind was racing ahead to what I might be able to do if the next prod on the starter

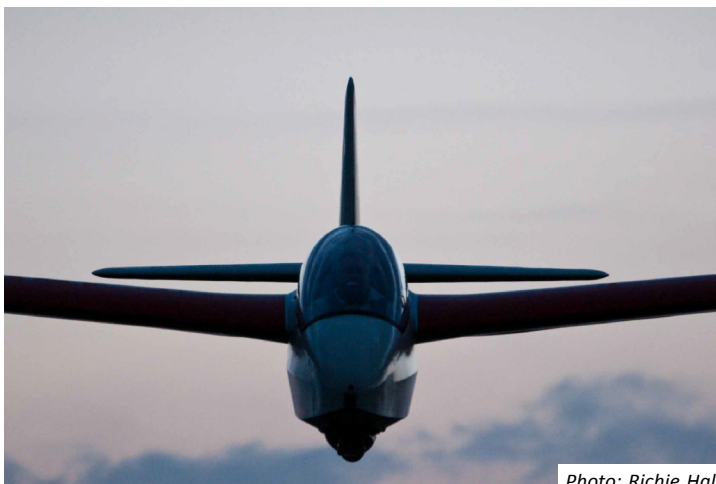


Photo: Richie Hale

Tiredness can kill. Take a break. (contd.)

button didn't get the required result. It did.

Relax, leave the winch on a rapid tickover to warm up a bit and get back to the car where I had a plastic container of cereal, just waiting for the milk to be added. I was munching through my breakfast looking out for movement elsewhere on the field and in the darkness I thought I saw a K13 being walked out to the other end of the windsock-to-windsock run. I had barely emptied my bowl of cereal when the bus and two or three other vehicles rushed past me on their way to the launch point. Nobody paused to say "Good Morning". There was a definite sense of urgency in the air.

I didn't want to be the one delaying the proceedings so, pausing only to take a photograph for the record, I examined the cables ready for Rover to collect them.

I then climbed back into the winch and checked over the controls and decided on the throttle setting. I looked up to see if someone was coming to collect the cables and was astonished to see that a heavy mist had descended on the field. I climbed out of the winch and realised that the viz was OK, all the glass on the outside of the winch was steamed up, partly due to the exhaust from the winch engine itself. I grabbed the squeegee and climbed up and wiped the roof glass clean and stuck my hand under the wire mesh to clear a patch directly in front of the driving seat.

In the time it took to climb back into the driving seat, the windows had misted up again. I jumped down, again armed with the squeegee and the Rover had arrived unseen! The brakes were already set and the cables were soon on their way to the launch point leaving me with the problem of the translucent windows. The sky was growing lighter and, on pushing the right button, the computerised voice announced a time that was later than the earliest the law allowed us to launch; it was all going wrong.

I wiped the windows once more then returned to the driving seat. The loudspeaker shouted in my ear: "The first launch will be.....". It was all happening too quickly, we hadn't done the light check. It didn't take long to realise that the light could have been pointing anywhere roughly in the direction of the winch and it would have been visible in the gloom. The light flashed "up slack". Into gear and let the tickover pull the slack. All out flashed and I opened the throttle. It was around then that I detected the next anomaly: I couldn't see the other end of the cable or what was, presumably, attached to it. I hoped that the throttle setting was suitable and comforted myself with the thought that the pilot had the yellow knob and he wasn't obliged to stay on the end!

The glider eventually climbed against the lightening sky and I followed its upward progress by leaning forward and peering through the hole in the condensation. After a normal-looking climb, the aircraft passed above the view through the windscreen and became totally invisible through the fresh layer of condensation which had settled on the roof in the previous 60 seconds or so. I continued the normal launch procedure relieved that nothing felt unusual. I later learned that the first flight was by our CFI, so you can ask him for his

opinion.

The next few launches gradually became less traumatic for me as the sun came up and the windows became more transparent. I began to relax and thought about having a launch myself, but the next winch driver didn't arrive until I had finished the first two-hour session when I climbed yawning from the winch and thankfully left it to my replacement.

I thought the excitement was over and made my way to the launch bus.

I was surprised to see that, presumably in the darkness, Phil and Fiona had sneaked a catering caravan into position behind the launch bus with tables and chairs set out for breakfast customers. No effort was spared in providing food and appropriate drink to anyone who needed it.

In my two-hour winch session, all those present had taken all the launches they needed for a while, and no newcomers had arrived; it was still only around 6.30am.

Someone pointed me at an empty K13 and suggested I took a launch. It was about then that I made a bad decision. Since there wasn't likely to be any lift around, I didn't mind forfeiting my P1 status and I asked if any of the instructors present would like to come along as ballast (!) and remain as a silent observer

Jon C accepted without hesitation. All part of his master plan.

The launch went as expected and I turned right after we left the cable.

At this point, I should explain one of my weaknesses. I have always had a sometimes-illogical deference to P1 instructors flying with me. They are always right. I was with Haste once when I let him take over when he said, "I'm in charge" and suggested we flew in the direction he described. I had left the glider quite well-trimmed and left the controls to him. After some time, we seemed to be getting a little far away from the field for our height and I timidly suggested that he should turn back. You've all heard similar anecdotes, but that's when I learned that "I'm in charge" doesn't mean, "I'm in control". The aircraft had been flying itself for a while.

With my usual deference, I wasn't upset by Jon's decision not to remain as a silent observer, and I followed his suggestion that he felt there was some lift "just over there". We waffled around, getting further away from the field and as I turned into what he was sure was definitely some useful rising air, I noticed that our angle to the field was disturbingly shallow and I said so.

As you know, it's impossible to look into the face of P1 when she or he is behind you in the K13, but I'm sure I would have seen a wicked grin on Jon's face as he realised I had fallen hook, line and sinker for his deception.

The result was that we made a straight-in approach to land at right angles to the runway in use, clearing the hedge by a safe but low height, followed by a long walk back to the launch point behind the tractor. My longest day ended at around 7am.

It's a good job that we can't get a flying brick for a dodgy bit of flying, and I don't have a pee bottle with holes in it!

That day like many days I had to fight the easy option of chickening out and postponing. The conditions were far from ideal with some front coming in the afternoon and a few annoying Notams. Most of the Weston pundits still sounded keen to soar to another time zone.

Many pilots find the mid-sixties K8b slow and cramped. Admittedly this may not be one's ideal cross country ship but some said that not far from Weston a private K8 owner did a few 300k with his own in recent years, and apparently the man is the size of a pregnant bear.

It turned out I wouldn't be the only fool to attempt a cross-country flight aboard a museum piece. Jon Christensen and Rob Jackson were

carefully planning to go and claim "the Bell" in Husband Bosworth in Daisy, our T-21. A large temporary airspace had been placed above Silverstone as the Red Arrows would be flying a display. We had a good briefing on the Notams, first with Rob and later with Andy Butterfield.

My flight plan was simple, a straight line to Sackville Farm via the south of Bicester to avoid the Silverstone temporary airspace. I would only have against me a front coming from the west and a few Hawk fighter jets.

On the Bus we had another look at the Notams for the day and the big guys' 240k flight. I was pushed in line around noon alongside Daisy and took a launch. The sky looked dull but I was lucky to find some weak lift soon after clearing the DZ, and after a bit of a fight the Eight was hitting the ceiling at a low 2700ft. Oh dear, time to leave the nest! The sky was still desperately blue but by now I would rather attempt the task and put the Eight in a field than land back at the bus.

The entire leg from Weston to the south of Bicester felt like a bad joke. The Vario was going baritone as the glider sank like a dart. I had to tap the instrument panel a few times to dislodge the vario needle stuck in max sink. Now joining the circuit at Bicester I was still plummeting. How frustrating! If you are amongst those people interested in foreign swearing and blasphemies you should have been in the cockpit then.

Luckily when all hope seemed lost the left wing met some rising air. The vario changed tone. The little Eight was around 900ft and now climbing. The lift strengthened enough and a Std Libelle joined me for a dance.

As the flight progressed it seemed clear that the conditions were getting better. There were now clouds and the base was rising. Navigating seems easy on the ground but once leaving the thermal one realises that nothing looks more like a town than the town next to it. Earlier in July I had followed the same route with Cloudy in a great flight in JSX and that was now helping me a lot. Even at 4600ft Milton Keynes is a big town and it takes

some courage to venture over the ski dome. Now I was flying higher and the flight was getting more comfortable. Nick Hill had completely reconditioned the compass days before and this was proving invaluable. Annoyingly the radio got out of range at Bicester and deprived me from Weston FM's soothing conversations.

Sackville farm is a tiny airfield that looks as small from the air as someone's garden. During my flight with Cloudy it had taken me a while to locate it. Approaching Bedford's disused aerodrome I was still

looking for my destination so I climbed to make finding the grass strip a bit easier. I ended up at 4700ft less than 3km from the airfield! From this position I could have entered final glide with the

One-way to Sackville Farm, a Silver Distance

Jeanfre Fachon

space shuttle.

Now the sky was great, it was only 1:30pm and I was at cloud base. Why not try for my silver duration? I hadn't a clue of my launch time so I just flew locally for ever. My butt had gone numb around Bicester anyway and I didn't have much to lose so I flew little triangles around Sackville to kill some time.

It takes some patience to achieve a silver duration and during those long hours I had time to sing to myself, pretend for a while I was a spitfire pilot, count the cars parked at Bedford and have a sandwich I had nearly forgotten about.

When time came to land I was still unsure if I had flown all of my five hours. I couldn't contact base and the lift was getting weaker. My approach did look surprisingly tidy for someone who had spent the afternoon strapped in the most uncomfortable cockpit since the Messerschmitt Me163.

One member from Sackville Farm Flying Club came to retrieve the little Eight on a quad bike and brought a warm welcome. He and his fellow members had been sitting outside their clubhouse watching me all afternoon, sipping cups of tea, and they kindly signed my BGA form. I had a complimentary coffee and congratulations on my flight as we watched small airplanes taking off one by one for an evening flight.

I had a Homer Simpson moment as it turned out I had landed thirteen minutes short of my five hours! Oh well. With close to 65km the Silver distance was valid. Paul Morrison, John Mart, Ian Rodway and Richie Hale came to the rescue for a long drive back to Weston and yes I still need to take them for a meal!

That day around 40 gliders from another airfield penetrated the temporary airspace around Silverstone and forced the Red Arrows to cancel their display. This created a bit of a stir with the aviation authority and reassured me on the quality of the instruction we receive at Weston. Our heroes Jon and Rob landed at Bicester with Daisy shortly after my low point and took an aerotow back. I am sure they will write a great story next year about a successful attempt!

1967 Party



Most photos by Paul Morrison, one possibly by Raphael Sofair (nicked by Paul Morrison)

So once again May arrived and as Inter-Club League team captain I found myself asking OGC members "are you available for the inter-club league this year?"

For those of you not in the know the Inter-Club League or ICL is a friendly and fun competition organised between local clubs in various areas around the country held over several weekends through the summer. Teams from each club compete in tasks set for novice, intermediate and pundit class pilots depending on ability and experience. The winners from the local regions then compete in a national final, which OGC has won on three occasions in recent years. OGC compete in the Midlands league, which for 2010 consisted of OGC, Banbury and Shenington. Windrushers (Bicester) have also been in the competition in recent years but this year their normal Club Captain was not available for most of the time and without him there nobody could generate any enthusiasm for the ICL at Bicester this year.

Banbury gliding club at Hinton-in-the-Hedges hosted the first ICL weekend of 2010 at the end of May. Unfortunately

Inter-Club League

Nick Hill

of the three bank holiday weekend days only the Sunday was flyable for the competition but OGC turned out a full team on the day with Jon Christensen as novice, Dave Bray as intermediate and Cloudy as pundit.

The weather looked OK but it was quite windy, around 20 knots at flying heights, which gave everyone problems with 4 of the 9 pilots competing landing out. The novice task was 99km with the wind being a serious challenge. The Banbury novice landed at Shenington (35km distance) whilst Jon C and the Shenington novice eventually made it round. Jon C was second in the Mozi at 44kph handicapped speed and quite happy to agree that given the wind the Shenington novice was a worthy winner at 48kph in a K6CR. In the intermediates the task was 165km. The Banbury intermediate made it 124km round before landing out whilst Dave Bray and the Shenington intermediate made it round. Dave came second in the LS6 at 56kph complaining of going backwards at times due to the wind and wondering how the Shenington pilot made it round at 77kph. The pundits were set 210km and only the Shenington pundit got round at 56kph in a Duo Discus. Cloudy was second in the LS4 making it 89km round the task (landing at Bidford) despite several attempts to get to the upwind TP. The Banbury pundit made it 71km on task. Overall after the first weekend Shenington were in the lead with 9pts followed by OGC with 6pts and Banbury in third with 3pts. The next round was at Shenington on the 12th and 13th June with two full days of competition with the overall results remaining very tight between the three clubs taking part.

Saturday looked like promising weather but a major problem was the level of Notams. Shenington identified that a north-westerly out and return was the best bet and duly set tasks for all classes. After waiting for the weather for a while they shortened the tasks slightly and everyone set off. The novice task was 106km but OGC had no official novice so after Paul Smith who was flying intermediate had returned in the Mozi Jon C took a launch as novice. After releasing from tow thinking he was in great lift he found himself in sink, crossed the start line and landed back but registered a start for OGC and as there was no Banbury novice he ended up second, the Shenington novice having made it round at 87kph. The intermediate task was 137km and Paul Smith in the Mozi had a slight problem with the lat/long for the final TP in his PDA so turned slightly short and was scored as a landout at 134km

and was placed third. Looking at the traces if he had gone round the last TP he would have still have just been beaten by the other intermediates so it didn't influence the result in the end. The Banbury intermediate won the day at 85kph with Banbury second at 74kph. Dave Bray won the 177km pundit task at 76kph in the LS6 despite arriving at the Clee Hill TP below the hill top and having to grovel around to climb and round the TP. Banbury were second at 65kph and Shenington third at 56kph.

Sunday looked less than promising on the weather front and team OGC arrived at Shenington not expecting to fly. In the end the weather was OK for a short window and tasks were set for all concerned. Once again there was no Hinton novice so it was a two horse race between Shenington and OGC over the 78km novice task. Cecilia Craig was flying novice for the first time, as was the Shenington novice so they were both discussing who should go the minimum distance and who would just cross the start line. In the end both started the task but thought better of the landout options and came back to Shenington honours even without making it a valid comp for the novices. Chairman Paul was the intermediate in 902 and successfully made it round the 97km task along with Carole Shepherd who was

flying for Banbury. The Shenington intermediate landed out after 27km so it was a straight speed contest between Banbury and OGC. Paul made it round at 46.09kph and Carole managed 46.6kph so winning by the narrowest of margins. Graham Barrett won the 117km pundit task in his Libelle at 58kph beating the Banbury Discus (51kph) and Shenington Lak17-18m (67km landout), which proves you don't need the latest hot ship to win.

The overall position for the weekend was Oxford 10pts, Banbury 10pts and Shenington 8pts giving a running total of Shenington on 17pts, OGC on 16pts and Banbury on 13pts.

With all to play for the final ICL weekend was at Weston on 7th and 8th August. The Saturday started out very wet and looking at the forecasts and sat pics it looked unlikely to clear enough to provide a long enough window to launch all the gliders for a held start and for them to fly any tasks so the day was scrubbed. Of course the weather then brighten up later to allow club flying and some local soaring but there were also no tasks set at other comps that day and no cross country flights on the national ladder so it proved to be the correct decision.

The weather for Sunday was much better and with tasks set for all competitors it looked like a good comp day for everyone. Of course plans never go as they should and a phone call from Bicester informed us that the tug that should have been coming over to help launch the grid was U/S and they couldn't spare any other tug as they were very busy. Never mind, the OGC and Shenington pilots were happy to take a winch launch and the Banbury tug was still coming over so no problems and all competitors were dispatched onto the field to the two launch grids. With the weather looking good the call was made to the Banbury club to ask for their tug to come over so we would send them all off. Slight problem, the Banbury tug refused to come over... After some impassioned phone calls by the Banbury team captain the tug did eventually make an appearance whilst we were launching the winch grid and in the end everyone got airborne without too much delay and set off on task.

In the novice class Jon C won the day for OGC getting round the 135km task at 69kph in the Mozi. Banbury were second (18km landout) with no Shenington novice.

Inter-Club League (contd.)

In the intermediate class chairman Paul was third round the 166km task at 63kph in 902 behind Banbury at 87kph and Shenington 76kph. In the pundit class Graham was second fastest round the 204km task at 76kph in his Libelle. Unfortunately due to an airspace penalty he dropped down to third overall with the Shenington pundit winning the class at 79kph and Banbury second at 62kph. Overall the points scored for the day were Banbury 7pts, OGC 5pts and Shenington 5pts.

The overall scores for the year were therefore Shenington 22pts, OGC 21pts and Banbury 20pts. So after one of the closest competitions for years congratulations go to Shenington for winning the Midland league for the third year in a row and thanks to all the OGC members who took part as pilots or helped out on the ground at the various ICL weekends.

Overall the ICL is a fun competition that is intended to encourage people to fly cross-country. It is a chance for more inexperienced pilots to see other clubs and meet other pilots and learn from the more experience ones. You can also have the best pundit in the world but unless you have an intermediate and a novice you might as well not bother, as it is these pilots that win you the ICL. So next year when the question is asked "are you available for the inter-club league next weekend?" why not say "YES Please".

Snow GC

*All photos:
Paul Morrison*



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Membership list by the treasurer from the Club computer [all corrections to him please].

The Chairman's Corner

Paul Morrison

When Cloudy asked me to write my usual contribution for this year's Final Glide I thought about what I usually write, which is basically a review of the year's events and an attempt to foresee what the future may hold for us and how I could make this a bit different this time around. This year I want to take a slightly different approach and whilst I will be touching on the usual aspects of how many launches we have done etc, I don't intend to repeat what Paul Smith as Treasurer or Keith as Secretary explains in far more detail elsewhere in this issue.

Looking back over 2010 it is apparent that whilst thankfully we have not had another 'Weston Otmoor' to focus all of our activities on, it is clear that both as a club and a sport in general, we do face significant challenges ahead if we are to ensure that we remain relevant and viable. Inspired by Alison Randle's article in the latest S&G I would therefore like to talk about what is not by its nature one of the sexiest aspects of gliding, but is absolutely vital to its very existence. I am of course referring to club governance and the role of the Committee and I would therefore like to spend a few minutes discussing the structure and role of the Committee and Directors as some of our newer members may never have read the little blue book 'The Constitution' that hides away in the corner of the starter pack or understand how the club exists as a legal entity.

Put simply, all the assets of the club (e.g. the gliders, building, equipment etc.) are owned by the Oxford Gliding Company Ltd. This is a formal legal entity and its Directors are elected each year at the AGM. The Directors whilst maintaining an over watch, delegate the running and organisation of the club to the Executive Committee, the members of which are also elected each year by the club members to fulfil the various roles required. The Executive Committee then appoint the various specialist club Officers (e.g. CFI, Ground Equipment Officer etc.) necessary to ensure the smooth and most importantly safe running of the club.

In the couple of years that I have spent as your Chairman I have been privileged to work with some very talented and enthusiastic Committee Members who have the best interests of the club and its members uppermost in all the decisions that are taken. However, we are not immune from the challenges that any business in the 21st Century faces and it has become very apparent that the role of the Executive Committee and the governance that it provides is no different to that of running a reasonable sized business, albeit we do it part time. The purpose of this rambling therefore is to put in your mind the thought that rather than saying 'why haven't they done this' or 'it should have been done this way', why not ask yourself not what the club has done for you, but rather what can you do for the club?

A common thread of any governance meetings held by the BGA is that gliding is an ageing sport and in these days when people are allegedly cash rich but time poor, there is a very real risk that gliding for many could become marginalised or irrelevant. More and more we find that new members have an expectation that launch slots and instruction should be capable of being 'booked' at a given time rather than as the by-product of a day spent helping out on an airfield. The full

implications to gliding of what has previously been experienced in the sailing community and has become known as the 'Marina Philosophy' remains to be seen, but clearly it will be a challenge for smaller, non commercial organisations such as OGC to remain viable if this becomes the accepted norm as this has the potential to change the very ethos of gliding, which personally I feel will be a great shame.

The previous paragraph may sound pessimistic. This is not my intention, but I do want to be realistic and to share with you my view that whilst OGC in its present format can never offer the same facilities as the larger seven day a week commercial clubs such as Bicester, and nor should we try to do so, we can offer a different proposition as a friendly club run by the members for the members. This I feel is our strength and this should be what we capitalise upon as our differentiator in what is a relatively congested local area for gliding clubs. It should also be remembered that at the end of the day, what we all do at weekends is supposed to be relaxation from our day jobs and for many, a break from a stressful working week. We therefore need to ensure that OGC remains a fun and friendly place where people want to spend their increasingly scarce leisure time. As you will see from Paul Smith's article elsewhere, this year was a reasonable year for OGC – we flew more launches than the preceding year and our turnover was at an all time high. But, as a club the majority of our expenditure goes on fixed costs (e.g. Insurance, Rent, Rates, Fuel etc) and as we all know, these are increasing. Unfortunately like many other clubs we have also seen a reduction in active flying members this year – the very life blood of the club and at the time of writing we currently have only 77 full flying members, at least 20 less than ideal. This means that as consequence of these two factors plus other accountancy factors such as depreciation, the Club only just broke even or technically in the Accountant's eyes, actually made a small loss. Whilst this is not disastrous, this is not conducive to the long term expansion of the club's fleet or to provide a comfortable nest egg in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Paul will therefore no doubt go into more detail in his article about his suggestions and proposals about what needs to be done in order to ensure that the Club remains in the best shape for the future however in summary though, we do need more Flying Members. So, spread the word about what a great sport and club this is amongst your friends and if you have any suggestions about what else we can do to market the club, please let the Committee know.

Turning now to happier thoughts, when you cast your mind back to what 2010 has offered us, it has not been a bad year. As seems to be becoming the norm, the season started before we were all ready with a few notable flights being added to the ladder elsewhere before our minds were really focused on trying to both stay up and go places! I'm sure it will be mentioned elsewhere, but there were a few good cross country flights flown by OGC members either from Weston or elsewhere during 2010 (over 14,000km in total) and special mention must be made of Andy's 500km, my first respectable 300km, Ritchie's 5hrs and 50km and Jeanfre proving that a 50km flight can be less

than 125km in length! Last month there was also an OGC trip to the seaside with Graham proving that T/E probes are for wimps and Hero Hanlon landing out in search of an ice cream, allegedly!

We of course have also just returned from a club expedition to Talgarth – the first for many years. This was a great success and gave many members their first experience of the magic that is wave and the inherently insane concept of ridge flying!

Personally, I can't recall the ladder ever being more fiercely contested than it was this year with Paul Smith finally succumbing to Cloudy's invincible lead. Oh well, there's always next year Paul!

It would also be remiss of me not to mention what was a first in the history of OGC and that is the twinning with Fliegerclub Schönhagen, a German gliding club from the outskirts of Berlin. The full extent of benefits that this will bring to both clubs remains to be seen, but it is hoped that club members from both clubs will take the opportunity to experience what each club has to offer and as many of you will be aware we were delighted to host two visitors from the club this summer. It is intended that an OGC delegation will make the 'Easy Jet' journey to Berlin next spring, but we will have to go a long way to beat the sausages and Me 163 'Rocket Fuel' that they kindly supplied OGC with. As anyone who was at the Summer Party will recall, this rocket fuel played no small part in the 'problem' that our Apollo Astronaut experienced the next day. If anyone has any ideas of how we can reciprocate, please let me know!

After many years of making do we have also taken the opportunity this year to give some long overdue attention to the fabric of the club's facilities and notable improvements include the re-painting of the club house, new double glazed windows and doors, the hugely impressive new BBQ 'Gazebo' and of course the new even patio. Rumours that some of our missing members can be found under the patio are I'm sure, unfounded! Special thanks for this must go to Phil Pratley, Doug Wood, Keith White, Paul Rogers and all those other members who contributed either to this or the Maintenance Day held last month. We also welcomed a few new members and again a special welcome to Rod, Eleonora, Kris and anyone else I've forgotten. We also sadly said goodbye to some of our members and it is hoped that in time, when their circumstances permit, some may return (assuming that they're not under the patio of course!).

Socially, we have had another series of hugely successful

parties and 2010 also saw the return of the 'Dawn To Dusk' flying extravaganza (or is it lunacy?). Who can forget the sights of the 1967 party although I'm sure that with time and therapy, it may be possible! Thanks for this must of course go to Fiona & Phil for the excellent food and to all of you for taking part and entering into the spirit.

A personal highlight for me at least was the appearance of Daisy at the Royal International Air Tattoo in July. To the best of my knowledge this is the first time that a civilian glider has been a participant at the world's largest military airshow and whether this will in time generate any new members remains to be seen, but it did present a unique marketing opportunity for OGC

and certainly generated some column inches for OGC in S&G.

Finally, no retrospective of 2010 would be complete without a mention of the Friday night groups. As Paul Smith mentions in his article, the income that the Club derives from Friday night flying is not insignificant and whilst we have always intended that the Club should not be dependent upon this for its existence, it is clear that without this we would have to find other means of offsetting some of the fixed costs. I would therefore like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Club to say a big thank you to Martin, Fiona & Phil for the sterling job they



slight modifications by Steve McCurdy

have done this year in firstly finding and secondly feeding the punters and crew, the later resulting in over 1,000 BBQ meals, a first for OGC. The profit from this will be ploughed back into the Club and be used to fund further improvements for 2011.

To draw this to a conclusion, I would wish to return to the thought that I asked you to consider at the start. This is your club and my commitment to you as Chairman is to do the best that I can to ensure that the club thrives and remains viable, but this can't be achieved without your support and input. The day to day operation of the club requires an inordinate amount of effort from a number of members and this includes not only the Instructors, Duty Pilots & Winch Drivers but also the unseen 'they' who turn up every Tuesday evening to fix the Ground Equipment, inspect and maintain the aircraft and do all the other hundred and one jobs that this 'business' needs to continue. My thanks to you all but equally a plea to others, when you have a moment ask yourself what can I do to help make OGC a fun and safe place to fly and to help ensure that the club and sport remains viable? To paraphrase Lord Kitchener – **'Your Club Needs You!'**

CFI's report

John Hanlon

Well, It's just coming up to the end of my first year as CFI, I spent many years dodging the position by taking up other posts as committee member, vice chairman and subsequently Chairman for quite a few years in all!

Eventually, I felt it was time I had a go and took over from Howard this time last year.

At first I did not know what to expect and to be honest had mixed emotions especially when attending the CFI's meeting we have every year and being told in no uncertain terms by John Garrett, our Senior Regional Examiner, that as CFI I am ultimately responsible for all flying activities even if I'm not there! As it has turned out, I need not to have been worried as I have a team of very excellent instructors backing me up to keep our impeccable safety record intact barring a few minor incidents with Astir undercarriage doors and a K13 wing.

So a really big thank you to them from me!

All the instructors do an excellent job in not only training you all to fly safely, but also maintaining those standards, so if an instructor has a word in your ear, pay attention because we want everyone to keep flying safely.

During the year we have had 4 instructors do completion courses, which were well overdue, 2 BI's converted to Assistant rated instructors. The coming year will see hopefully at least 2 more BI's joining the team and maybe more!

It has been an eventful year culminating in an OGC expedition to Talgarth with the DG-505 where we only lost 2 days due to the weather – which is quite remarkable considering it's in Wales where it rains a lot (ask Dunstable who went the week before us). We now have a number of instructors that have experienced this wonderful site and are itching to go back!

So next year when the poster goes up for expeditions, don't be shy in coming forward as spaces will be limited.

I would just like to wish everyone great flying in the coming year and in the words of the duty sergeant on Hill Street Blues...

Let's be careful out there!

The Barbecue Treadmill

One sausage or two, madam?

Phil Hawkins

It's not always realised just how much work went into the Friday night BBQs at the Club. Fiona and I both have full time jobs but only on four days a week, hers permanently and mine effectively during the summer since the BBQ preparations took over our Fridays completely. We thoroughly enjoyed doing it, but now at the end of the season we are rather looking forward to a break from this continuous treadmill.

Forward planning for each Friday started the previous weekend. By that time Fiona was already starting to think about what we would be cooking. Usually by around Tuesday she had sent out an email to the list server detailing the proposed menu for Friday, and had asked Martin for a contact name for the visiting group. We usually had an email exchange with the group contact, to get an estimate of numbers wanting to be fed, any vegetarians, any muslims (beef or chicken sausages required), any coeliac sufferers (gluten-free bread rolls required), or anyone who just didn't want red meat. For them we normally offered chicken or fish as an alternative.

I maintained a booking list during the week as the responses came in, to get some idea of the size of the Friday group, which typically was anything from 25 to 60 once all the crew and non-flying visitors were included. About every second or third week we made trips to the Booker cash and carry on the Osney Mead industrial estate in Oxford. To buy stuff there you need to represent a genuine company, but it doesn't have to be a catering company. I used the details from my computer software business when applying. You get a pass card, which has to be shown when entering the warehouse and when paying up at the exit.

We usually took time off work at Thursday lunchtime for the Booker expedition, to miss the worst of the Oxford traffic. Prices there are good for some things, not for others, so you have to be careful. Sometimes the 100% beef burgers were on offer, and we usually kept a few of those in stock for the occasional customer with gluten-free requirements, but usually we went for the slightly cheaper 80% beef variety. Their sausage trays were good value at 3 for £10, although the 'pork and black pudding' variety were an acquired taste. Frozen garlic bread was a great labour saving discovery. It was packed into boxes of about 70 slices, which took only a few moments to toast on the BBQ. We tried the big boxes of frozen chicken breasts on a couple of occasions, but we realised after the first trial they needed soaking and rinsing after defrosting to remove some of the salt. They were succulent and very popular, though. They were packed in Holland and interestingly were marked as halal, which is important to muslims. You try asking any major supermarket whether their meat is halal and they just look blank. They have no muslim customers? Unbelievable.

Bearing in mind the amount of space available in the freezer at home, sometimes the trolley at Booker was piled high. The burger baps in particular didn't weigh much but took up a lot of freezer space. Fiona made most of the puddings herself, but we did buy the occasional frozen apple pie or cheesecake. Onions by the sack were cheap and convenient, and most of the burger sauces and napkins came from there. It was always worthwhile looking at their fresh stuff too, such as packs of big tomatoes for slicing. The 'cool room' was good for picking up multi-packs of Elmlea cream and basic cooking margarine for cakes. However, one of the best things about the trip was the bacon butty from the mobile shop in the car park, to eat on the way home!

Most of the fresh fruit and vegetables came from Tesco, as well as cake ingredients. We usually did the Tesco expedition late on

Thursday evening or early on Friday morning. It takes a while to get used to shopping for 50+ people instead of a normal sized family. One punnet of strawberries doesn't go very far. You need about eight. If we were planning to cook whole salmon then special trips to Aylesbury, Brackley or Banbury were usually necessary to find them, because the Bicester store is fairly useless for anything except the basics. On the way to Aylesbury one day we discovered the Hunter's Farm shop on the left just after Waddesdon. Their home-made cakes were pretty good and occasionally we bought them to supplement Fiona's own efforts. When planning the shopping list for both Booker and Tesco she had a master template, modified each week, in which the proposed menu was printed on the right, and all the necessary ingredients to achieve it were printed on the left.

We also bought meat from three different butchers in Bicester. Some of these delivered to our house on Friday after we had ordered by phone earlier in the week, some had to be collected. Regent Meat in Crown Walk were particularly helpful with supplying bags of chicken legs and those big meaty pork ribs with the sauce stuff already on them. We tried gammon steaks from two other shops, and rump steaks on one occasion, and all were very successful.

Each Friday we both devoted the whole day to BBQ preparations, usually starting before 9am. That's every Friday from mid-April to the end of August, apart from our holiday in May. We did all preparation at home, as it was more convenient and gave us more space than the Club kitchen. Assuming all the shopping had been done and the dining table was groaning under piles of fruit and veg, we often started in the morning with Fiona cake baking while I concentrated on the salads. Although sometimes I helped with the cakes, like grating the peel and extracting the juice from limes (fiddly job) or cutting the paper linings for the baking tins.

Another morning job was counting out plenty of frozen bread rolls and sausages from the freezer, and laying them out on a table to defrost. My first salad job was usually slicing the red onions and tomatoes, layered with chopped basil leaves, which seems to be universally popular. That one gets a dressing made from balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Next I sliced up white onions into a fairly large saucepan, topped off with a few dried herbs and a bit of cooking oil. You need to fill the pan right to the brim because onions collapse down a lot when fried. After that I did the green salad, usually containing two or three sorts of lettuce, mustard or cress, watercress and spring onions as well as any unusual leaves we had found such as rocket or lamb's lettuce. Radishes were quartered into a separate container.

Other salads were different each week. If Fiona was planning a Greek salad I would often help by slicing peppers and cucumber for that, followed by dicing up the feta cheese. If a waldorf was in preparation I would chop celery, slice apples and halve grapes. Often we did coleslaw, which needed finely sliced cabbage and onions, and grated carrots. Fiona sometimes did unusual cooked salads with rice or couscous, even roasting whole trays of finely diced vegetables such as parsnips, butternut squash and onions that were browned and then cooled before mixing with the rice.

By late morning we would usually have moved on to pudding preparation. On any particular Friday Fiona might have been mashing up biscuits, slicing bananas and whipping cream for a banoffee, or layering sponge fingers dipped in coffee liqueur with mascarpone for a tiramisu, or

making jelly for a trifle. Variety was one of our aims, and it all takes time to prepare.

One of my last chopping jobs was usually filling the fruit salad bowl with fresh pineapple, strawberries, melon or kiwi. Fiona's last job was often making pancake batter by the gallon, whizzing the simple ingredients in the magi-mix. If we were planning to cook whole salmon, they needed stuffing with handfuls of fresh herbs from the garden before being wrapped in greaseproof paper and made up into sealed parcels with foil. New potatoes were merely emptied into a large pan, cutting the larger ones in half if necessary. Thawed sausages needed their links cutting apart and were stacked in boxes ready for quick dumping onto the BBQ, and the gammon steak rounds were cut in half with scissors. If we were doing the chicken breasts they needed marinating in a large plastic container with Fiona's yogurt dressing and fresh mint.

By this time it was usually after 2pm and we'd take a break for a decent lunch, because we knew it was unlikely we'd have time to sit down in the evening for a proper dinner. By around 4pm I would start packing the bread rolls into a large laundry basket, then came loading up the car and trailer with all the prepared salads, cakes and puddings in boxes and trays. Meat was usually transported in insulated carrier bags to keep it cool, especially in the hottest part of the summer. We took newspaper, a saw and a small axe for dealing with firewood. The BBQ tools were taken in a basket together with pancake sauces, cooking oil, dried herbs for the mushrooms, rubber gloves and matches. Another bag held clean tablecloths, aprons and oven gloves. Boxes of burgers were taken straight out of the freezer at this stage, as they are always cooked from frozen.

Soon after 5pm we would be at the Club, where my first job was always emptying out last week's ashes from the BBQ pits and building new fires. Assuming the weather looked settled I would also make a bonfire for lighting up later. A lot of wood has been left at the Club this year by various members, not to mention the remains of the old BBQ roof, so unlike last year we have never been short of fuel for fires. Finding dry kindling was sometimes a problem, but perhaps I had been thoughtful enough to make a small stash under cover the previous week.

This year I bought restaurant charcoal from Bagnall's at Enslow, near the Rock of Gibraltar pub. It came in 12kg bags which they import from Argentina. Strange but true, your burgers were cooked with South American wood. Sometimes the bags cost £7 each, and sometimes £6 if I was able to chat up my friend Carol who works there. About half a bag went onto the BBQ fires before they were lit, with more added later. On average we used about 1½ bags each week.

While I was busy with fire preparation, tidying tables and chairs and putting up the parasols, Fiona was busy laying tablecloths, unpacking the meat and salads, finding the serving spoons and tongs from the kitchen, and getting help from other members with carrying out heavy stacks of plates and the cutlery drawer. The big stainless steel trays were used on either side of the BBQ pits and on the big shelf at the back, to give ourselves clean surfaces for the food.

When everything was ready there was often time for a short coffee break while we decided what time to light up. It gave us an opportunity to sit down for a few minutes, although Fiona often used this as a convenient

The Barbecue Treadmill

(contd.)

Phil Hawkins

time to slice up the mushrooms into a wide paella pan for frying. Deciding what time to ignite the BBQ was always difficult because it depended on so many different things like the weather, predicted Hercules activity, time of sunset, the size of the visiting group and whether or not we were doing chicken, which takes longer to cook. Sometimes we got it right, sometimes we got it wrong and the punters had to wait for their food.

Having deliberated these conflicting factors we lit up about 1½ hours before the anticipated arrival of hungry aviators. While the fires were still flaming we started cooking the onions and the mushrooms, both of which were pulled off to one side to keep warm after a relatively short time. The potatoes were also started off early, using a kettle of boiled water from the kitchen and fresh mint that grows outside our caravan.

The fires aren't ready to start grilling the meat until about 30 to 40 minutes after lighting, although we often managed to do ourselves a quick burger around the edges while the flames were still going up in the middle. Sausages or chicken went on first, being kept warm in the metal tray and container perched between the BBQ pits. Burgers and steaks, which cook more quickly, were left until the last minute when the first customers had started to wander in from the airfield. Any special orders such as vegetarian sausages or bean burgers were cooked in a separate pan, and if fish was on the menu the foil parcels had to be turned every five minutes.

Soon it was time to take the lids off the salads, unwrap the bread basket, open the butter and stand back for the rush. It would begin to get hectic with hungry people queuing up to fill their plates. The members knew their place and usually let the visitors go first, who were often surprised they didn't have to choose between all the meat we offered. They could have everything, and usually there were leftovers later if anyone still had room. By this time the mushrooms, onions and potatoes were ready on the side for self-service, and the salad table was being attacked from all sides.

We also kept track of the cash coming in as people paid up for their food and were crossed off the booking list. It was much easier for us if the nominated visitor contact could be persuaded to collect up their £5 notes and pay us in a single amount. There were *always* extra members who had not booked in advance being added to the list, but we *always* over-catered to allow for this. Even so, it was often a nail-biting time as our stock of cooked food rapidly dwindled, because the people who worked hardest with jobs like packing the hangar always appeared last at the BBQ. Spare bread rolls and salads were sometimes held back until this stage to make sure there was enough for everybody.

The relative hush that descended as dozens of people tucked into their food was an amusing effect that we often enjoyed and commented upon. But it was no time for us to relax. As soon as we had finished using one of the BBQ pits I piled up the embers underneath, adding extra charcoal for the pancake pan. This did take some time to get going, so I did this as early as possible while Fiona was still cooking extra burgers on the other grid. But she was soon busy serving up the puddings and cakes

to the first hesitant visitors. As before they didn't always realise they didn't have to choose, they could sample everything, all in the same bowl if they wanted.

As soon as the pancake pan was hot enough to smoke the oil I was sloshing in the batter, which fizzed at the edges if the heat was just right. Visitors were often disappointed that I didn't toss the pancakes but that pan is just too heavy to wave around all evening. It weighs about 8 pounds and cost me £1 from a car boot sale. Trying to guess how many pancakes would be eaten on any particular night was hopeless. The Chipping Norton Scouts ate hardly any at all, much to our surprise, while the seniors from the Princes Risborough Rotarians ate as many as I could produce and still wanted more.

Around this time someone was usually willing to put a match to the bonfire and keep that going. If the wood had got wet then shovelfuls of hot embers from the BBQ were a better way of starting it off. The bonfires were a popular part of the late evening relaxation, but there was still a fair amount of work to be done before we could relax. We very much appreciated help at this stage with clearing up, stacking dirty plates and washing the pans and trays. The last job of the evening was re-packing the car and trailer with empty bowls and leftovers. Back at home we stashed leftover cooked meat in the freezer for re-cycling in the winter as sausage casseroles and shepherd's pies. One of the perks of the job, you could say! Some of the salad leftovers were eaten over the weekend, the rest went for compost.

On Saturday morning we usually had a washing-up session for bowls and plastic containers, having been too tired to deal with them the night before. I would count the takings and arrive at a final total for the number of meals we had served. The names from the booking list were entered into a spreadsheet so that we knew how many meals each member had bought. Financial records of expenditure and revenue were also kept up to date, for presentation to the Committee at the end of the year.

Then it was time to do other things for the weekend, such as flying, but already we were thinking ahead to the following Friday night. *Need to order gammon steaks or pork ribs for delivery on Friday, need to be on the lookout for whole salmon at half price to keep in the freezer, perhaps we'll need a trip to the cash and carry soon, need to check how many bags of charcoal we have left, and so on...*

There will be food of some sort provided at the AGM (free of charge to members) but at the time of writing I can't say what that will consist of. For a while we are just going to enjoy the novelty of not having to do much on a Friday!



RIAT Crew

Daisy does RIAT

*Text and photos:
Dave Weekes*

It was Chairman Paul that started it. As a long time volunteer at RIAT (the Fairford Airshow to you and me) he'd been talking to one of the organisers about it being a big year for the military cadet movement. Leading on from that he'd "volunteered" Daisy in her full Air Cadets regalia to be one of the exhibits (and by far the cheapest!) at the show – only a static exhibit but you can't win them all.

So we put together a crew – Rob Jackson, Dave Bray, Xin, Doug Wood, Richie Hale and me for the Saturday with Paul Wilford and Liisi as additional Sunday staff.

Barman Paul volunteered some funding for exclusive "crew uniforms" – we did look smart. Red Vintage Glider Club polo shirts with an additional "Oxford Gliding Club RIAT 2010" logo.

We'd got Daisy onto the trailer the previous Sunday and Doug and I delivered her to Fairford on the Friday evening. We were issued with very impressive looking

"AIRCREW & GROUND CREW" passes because we had come with an aircraft! – plus free lunch vouchers & access to the aircrew lounge – luxury!

There was a teensy weensy downside because we needed to get there on the Saturday early enough to get Daisy rigged and on display (and miss the normal traffic queues), so a 5.30 am start from Weston was needed. We drove straight in, got parked remarkably close to Daisy, got her rigged - added the "Oxford Gliding Club – the only way to fly" sign and were open for business.

It didn't take too long to establish the pattern. You'd see them coming – hundreds over the weekend – 45+ year old males with daft grins on their faces saying things like "First flight I ever had was in one of them", "I went solo in one", "Haven't seen one in years", "Happy days", "In the Air Scouts at Lasham". I don't know whether we'll get any new members or trial flights out of the exercise but we certainly triggered lots of good memories.

Among the first Sedbergh veterans were two Air Cadets officers with a mob of juniors in tow – who all clearly disbelieved that Daisy was capable of flight, never mind that their leaders had at one time been 16 years old and solo pilots at that - typically with 20 three minute launches before soloing – it really doesn't bear thinking about, but most of them seem to have survived!



But the veterans usually added "But I soloed in a Cadet Mark III" – a T31 to you and me. T21's were budgeted for 4 minute circuits, T31's for only 3 minutes! Less time to get things wrong and T31's were apparently half the price of a T21 – could that have been the reason for all those solos in Mark III's? The ATC officers apparently clung to the T21's because they could actually soar in them!

And we got a free airshow! – The new Airbus A400 Hercules replacement – its first time on show, the Raptor – incredibly manoeuvrable (and noisy!), the Patrouille de France display team – better than the Red Arrows! The Vulcan - It just went on and on. I tried walking to the end of the static display line – I never made it –

much too far. An incredible show – especially early morning amid all those parked aircraft and nobody else in sight.

On the Sunday we'd gained confidence in our "Aircrew" passes and walked over to the BMMF Lancaster – "OK if we have a closer look" – the crew gestured vaguely at the back door which was quite enough invitation. Half an hour spent inside the Lanc, with all the paying punters corralled at a safe distance, hating us – oh yes! But the inside of a Lancaster is definitely not the place to get out of in a hurry. Apparently there was an average of 1.3 survivors per Lancaster crew lost – and you could easily see why. An awfully long and difficult way to the exits.

A couple of bemused Polish pilots – both ex glider pilots – were invited to sit in Daisy, so they offered us the chance to sit in their cockpit while they explained all the knobs and switches – a Sukhoi Su 22M fighter bomber. Now that was a pretty fair swap!

Would we do Fairford again if asked? Definitely!

The Oly Monster

Text and photo:
Tony Hoskins

Some of you may have the misfortune to remember me and my OGC antics of 10 years ago and more, however still being very involved in gliding at my new club in the South of England, I thought some interest may be drawn of a little escapade of mine from 2009.

None of you will have seen the white and red monster that lives in the middle of the South-down trailer park, it's generally nothing to be afraid of, but the story of how the "Oly Monster" came to be there is a story of pain, and anguish, and too much spare time.

The Olympia 2B was essentially born out of the end of WW2. Elliotts of Newbury, who had built troop-carrying gliders during the war, was keen to move back into their original market of furniture manufacture. The Air Ministry however decided that Britain needed to maintain its aviation interest for those generations likely to survive the impending Cold War, and therefore offered EoN the German Olympia Meise design which had proved so popular with the Luftwaffe training schools. EoN, although not keen on entering the sport gliding market, altered the design to incorporate some fuselage refinements and shortened the wingspan to 15 meters. It initially proved very popular, but the development of the Skylark series of Slingsby gliders in Yorkshire, and the Schleicher K6 series in Germany sealed the future of the Oly forever.

My club has had a long history with the Olympia 2B, amongst the photo albums stored in the club you will see that it used to be the pride of the single-seater fleet at its 1950s site at Firle! One member owns a pristine example which has recently returned from a complete rebuild in Poland, and those members around the club about 10 years ago will fondly remember John Lee's (of Colditz Glider fame) Oly, something along the lines of a "3 into 1" example.

Still, having flown one, I firmly believe that everyone should try an Oly at least once, its good soaring performance, but poor glide performance will teach a thorough grounding in how to use every bit of energy in the air, a perfect airframe for those newly solo and keen to learn soaring.

Summer 2009 I was starting an Aviation workshop, and in my travels for tooling I came across an engineer emigrating to Spain. He was having a clearance of tools through ebay and as so much of it was of interest to me, I took a wander up to his house near Leicester during a bi-yearly pilgrimage home to see the parents. Whilst sifting through his wealth of aeronautica, I found what looked like an Oly 2B lying against the wall under some rags. I asked him

what the story was and essentially the short of it was that some 6 years previous, he'd had too much to drink at a Vintage rally, and accidentally bought a 1958 example.

In the sober light of day, he took stock of his new acquisition and realised that indeed he had done something utterly stupid, and away it was whisked to storage in



his garage, from which it had never emerged. "So what are you going to do with it?" I enquired, "I'll probably burn it" he said. I thought this a rather drastic action, but he'd tried to

sell it previously and nobody wanted it, and now with him leaving for Spain, he couldn't really take it with him. "Do you want it?" he asked, my honest answer was no! On the verge of redundancy and living on a budget, I should really be concentrating on the important things like mortgage, and beer and food and beer – so simply I walked away from the Oly, taking just the tooling I required.

Skip to November 1st 2009, freshly redundant I was awoken from my post-party slumber by the phone. "Hello Tone, it's Pete with the Oly" – I just about remembered the beast – "I have a proposition for you – logbooks are in the trailer – trailer is now at Hus Bos, cut me a deal and it's yours, otherwise it's burnt at the Bonfire Party on the 7th!" This posed somewhat of a predicament for me. Much am I ever the fan of things of a certain vintage, I definitely didn't want to see it burnt. Financial restraints at the time meant my cash input to such a project was going to be minimal – but he suggested something affordable. My head said no, my mouth said no, and I promptly went back to bed for a bit.

The problem was the Oly monster lurked in my brain, could I let the thing burn? Should it have a new lease of life? Is it worth bothering about? The hunt for workshop premises was in full swing, but I still couldn't stop thinking of the Oly. Thursday 5th, I woke up pretty early, the first thing that entered my brain was Oly – go get the Oly!

I drove to Hus Bos, a leisurely 4-hour drive, and it was worse than I thought. The trailer was pretty rotten, it had barely made it to the airfield from just down the road – how was I going to get this back to Sussex? The tyres had been changed but that was the best bit! I had no trailer board, being a vintage trailer there have never been any lights, but it needed to go and it wanted a home! The Oly looked pretty structurally good, and the logs showed a long but increasingly infrequent use – I'd come all that way – how could I leave it behind!

A deal was done, the trailer hooked up – lights were going

to be an issue, but a quick trip to a rotten caravan on the bonfire wielded a couple of light clusters and a few nails, so within minutes the trailer looked much more legal and I set off. Soon becoming obvious that the trailer was not built for speed and that the winter nights were drawing in – with a quick call to Chairman Paul to ask permission for an overnight stay, I just made it to Weston-on-the-Green. The Oly and I night-stopped there and with the addition of a breakaway cable and some more air in the tyres the next morning (thank you Jon C), I slowly made my way down to Southdown.

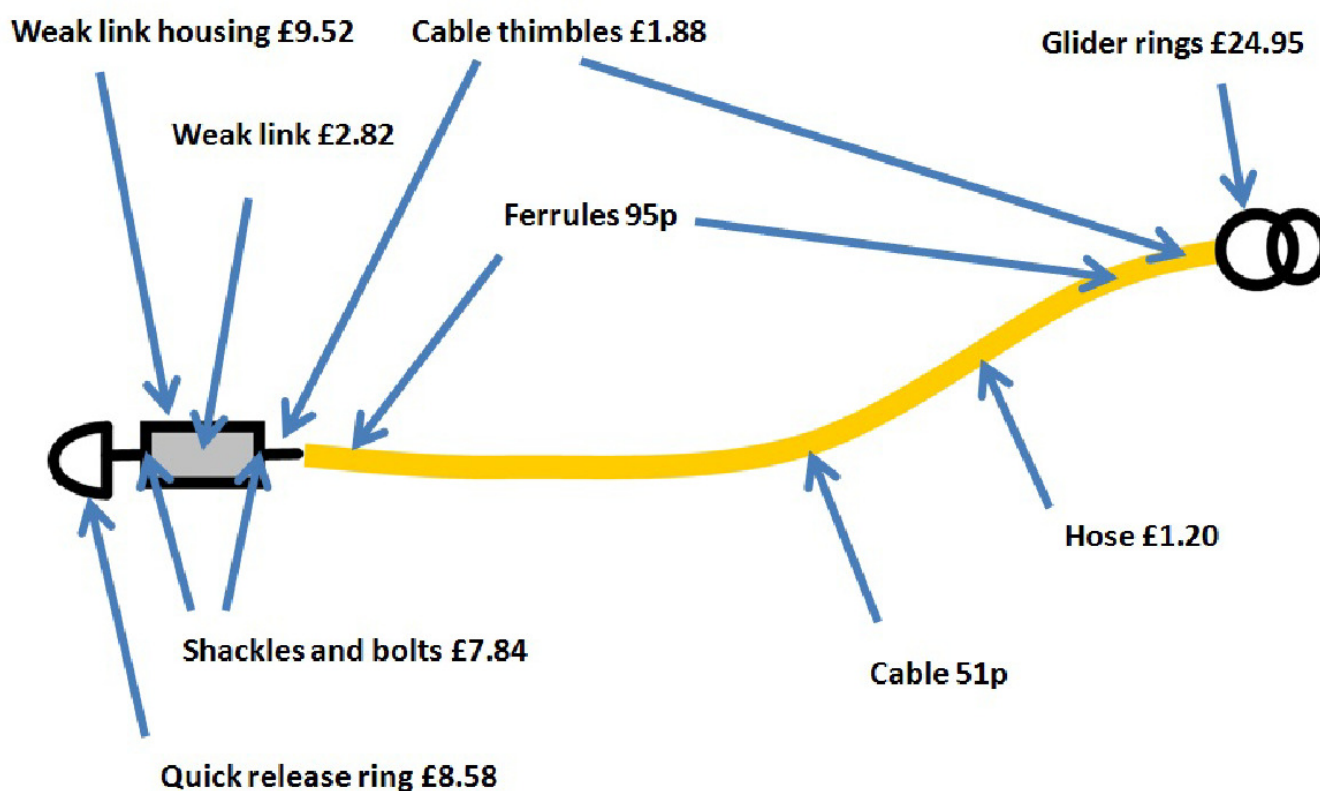
It was pretty obvious the trailer needed a complete rebuild, the wooden box structure had little of any sort of integrity and if the Oly was to last another 50 years, it needed a new home. Off the whole thing went to my hangar at Goodwood where the airframe could be stored and the trailer stripped in warm and dry comfort. Winter turned to spring and with new marine ply cladding and a complete fabric coat, the trailer emerged as good as new, roadworthy and waterproof (not snow proof as I later discovered, but a change of exterior paint sorted that!). The whole thing was then moved down the road to my Partridge Green workshop and with several friends lending a helping hand, the Oly was stripped of its access panels and fairings and a thorough grilling was given to everything that moved or was glued to something else. All in all she's a sound machine and it wasn't long before the paperwork was done, the insurance was in place, and the weather cleared to a gentle April morning. There was nothing for it - there was nothing more we could test on the ground!

I'd decided during the rebuild process that the Oly was for sharing so I'd sold 10 shares in the beast. At £150 each and £45 a year, it offers some very cheap flying. First flight day dawned bright and sunny, with just a slight breeze from the south. My buddy Paul Barker (some will remember him as the chap who soared a DG400 to Mt Etna and back) stepped in to take the first flight and after perhaps my 4th DI of the morning, I wished him luck, and hooked on the tow rope. From that moment on, the Oly has continued to perform like a dream, and I think I speak for all that have flown her that when I say that she may be old, and she might not be in the best cosmetic condition, but there sure is a lot of life left in her yet...

Does a strop cost really cost sixty quid?

Jon Christensen

Surely not, I didn't believe it, so decided to investigate and here's what I found.



Well blimey, that's a total of £58.25 so yes it does cost about sixty quid... but hang on, that doesn't include VAT so that brings us to a mighty £68.44...and VAT is going up so that's £69.90... err... forgot shipping that's an extra quid or two... oh... and someone has to make them. So actually a full strop costs over seventy quid!

The bit of a strop lost after a break is worth about fifty quid, less than a full strop as some of the bits remain on the end of the cable if it has been assembled correctly. Twenty of these strops per year are never recovered, or in other words £1000 per year is lost somewhere on the airfield!



As briefly mentioned in my annual meandering elsewhere in this edition of Final Glide, 2010 also saw a historic and what is hoped will be a mutually beneficial twinning with Fliegerclub Schönhagen, a German gliding club who are based near Berlin.

How this came about was that earlier this year, Keith, the club's secretary, received an e-mail from the Committee of Fliegerclub Schönhagen who surprised us all by saying that they had found Oxford Gliding Club on the internet, and as they felt we were kindred spirits in both size and aspiration, they were interested in twinning with us. This is not something that OGC had ever done before and to be honest we were surprised and flattered by this. 'What us', 'Surely they must mean Bicester..' were some of the comments uttered in response.

Thankfully we are lucky to have several native German speakers in the club and after Cloudy made contact with them on behalf of the Club it was duly established that no, this was no mistake, they did mean us. Once we had got over our surprise that our modest weekend only club had come to their notice, attention turned to what benefits the twinning could bring to both clubs and in August we were delighted to receive Eckhard (CFI) and Matthias (Treasurer) for a weekend visit.

As those of you who were there will testify, this visit was a great success and Fi & Phil's themed BBQ on Friday night got things underway spectacularly. Fortunately the weather and RAF were kind to us that weekend and Eckhard and Matthias took great delight in experiencing all that OGC had to offer on Friday and Saturday with 'Daisy' being a particular favourite of both. Saturday night, after a very amusing and informative presentation by Eckhard on his club and the surrounding area, saw a large percentage of the club and our visitors dining Al Fresco in a local traditional Oxfordshire pub. The conversation and 'Rocket Fuel' flowed freely late into the night and personally I found Eckhard's accounts of his time as a Mig 21 'Crew Chief' fascinating.

Sadly, after a bit of local shopping for souvenirs on Sunday morning to appease relatives, wives and loved ones, it was time to bid our guests farewell and my thanks to those who helped with the logistics, in particular Tim Elliott and Peter Boulton who provided the taxi service from Oxford and to the Airport respectively.

OGC and their willingness to make the partnership a success. Precisely what benefits this will bring to both clubs remains to be seen, but it is hoped that throughout 2011 and beyond, members from both clubs will take the opportunity to experience what each club has to offer. It is apparent from both their club's website and Eckhard's presentation, that theirs is a young and enthusiastic club which operates from a licensed aerodrome in a very interesting part of Germany which makes it ideal for a short weekend break to experience gliding and sightseeing.

“So What Have The Germans Ever Done For Us....”*

Paul Morrison

Following their visit Eckhard kindly sent me a DVD of their visit and if anyone would like to borrow or have a copy of this, please let me know. Unfortunately the rather excellent sausages and 'Rocket Fuel' that they also

left with us have long since been consigned to memory, for some more than others!

It is obvious that as both a club and individual members, we will only get out of this 'partnership' what we put into it and therefore I would urge you to take advantage of any opportunities this arrangement affords and

equally I know I can rely on you to make any visitors from our sister club very welcome.

It is planned that a delegation from OGC will make a visit to Fliegerclub Schönhagen in Spring 2011 and if anyone is interested in participating in this, please let me or any Committee Member know. They are

fortunate that their airfield has a hotel on site (in which they have negotiated a favourable rate for their OGC guests and we have been assured of a very warm welcome of which I have no doubt. They also have an agent for PZD Sailplanes on site so it could be an ideal opportunity to take a look at the new Perkoz SZD-54, the successor to the Puchacz. Surely the ideal venue for a springtime weekend away?

In the meantime, if anyone is interested in learning more about Fliegerclub Schönhagen, there is a link off the OGC website or at:- <http://www.segelfliegen-edaz.de/>

* with apologies to Monty Python



Photo: Eckhard Peter, club logo nicked from their website

Pre-landing Checks

Neil
Swinton

If you fancy a good argument, go to any gliding club, and ask in the bar about 'downwind checks'. People hold very strong views on the rights or wrongs of using such things, and here at OGC we are no different.

Following discussions, with immediate effect, we would like all pilots to try to use the USTALL reminder as a PRE-LANDING CHECK. We will look at what USTALL should mean in a second, but it might be worth just recapping a couple of arguments for and against the 'downwind check list'.

For:

- * We have memorised checklists for launching and aerobatics, so why not have one for the vital action of landing?
- * When stressed, people can easily revert to a rote-learned checklist without too much brain power

Against:

- * reciting a checklist just before a diagonal leg takes away attention from the circuit at a critical time
- * If the aircraft is being handled correctly for that part of the flight, the check is not required.

Lack of space precludes a fuller discussion on the merits or otherwise of these arguments, but feel very free to grab an instructor for a discussion in our bar!

So USTALL means:

U: Undercarriage - ensure down

S: Speed - assess wind and nominate approach speed for later.

T: Trim - reminder - you will need to retrim - but maybe not yet.

A: Airbrake - Look for the lever. Make sure it is the correct one. However don't put your hand on it until after you have trimmed in the low key area.

L: Landing Area - A good look at where you intend to land to ensure it is clear, with an alternative plan.

L: Lookout - reminder - keep looking all around - again and again - the circuit can be very busy.

A key point is WHEN to do these checks. Ideally they should be performed just prior to starting your circuit, so when in, or approaching, the high-key area. Please don't start to recite them at 400' as you are flying away from the airfield on your diagonal leg.

One aid for your flying may be to introduce a definite 'decision to land' point, where you stop being in 'flying mode' and start being in 'landing mode'. When you make that swap, you do your USTALL checks.

Finally - failing to get the aircraft configured correctly for landing can involve more than a harmless wheels-up landing. A recent serious crash at a neighbouring airfield may well have been caused by the pilot using the gear lever instead of the airbrake handle.

So try to remember your USTALL Checks.